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IRAN AND SYRIA: NEXT STEPS

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IRAN AND SYRIA: NEXT STEPS

THURSDAY, JUNE 23, 2011

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10 o'clock a.m., in room 2172 Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. I am pleased to convene today's hearing. So the committee will come to order. After recognizing myself and the ranking member, Mr. Berman, for 7 minutes each for our opening statements, I will recognize the chairman and the ranking member of our Middle East and South Asia Subcommittee for 3 minutes each. And I will then recognize members for 1-minute statements if they have one. We will then hear from our witnesses.

Thank you, gentlemen, for being with us. I would ask that you summarize your prepared statements in 5 minutes each before we move to the questions and answers with members under the 5-minute rule.

Without objection, the witnesses' prepared statements will be made a part of the record. And members may have 5 days to insert statements and questions for the record subject to the length limitations in the rules.

The Chair now recognizes herself for 7 minutes. Today's hearing is part of a broader oversight effort by the committee to examine U.S. policy options to address the twin threats presented by both Iran and Syria. We will continue to be engaged in a number of other activities—from roundtable conversations with EU, Middle East, and other visiting dignitaries and ambassadors to meetings with panels of experts on Iran and Syria—to ensure that we do not take our eye off some of the most pressing threats to U.S. and global security.

The date of May 24, 2011, a watershed in our efforts to confront the Iranian-Syria axis over their nuclear programs, passed with little fanfare. On May 24th, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) issued two damning reports with respect to the nuclear programs of Iran and Syria. The first, with respect to Iran, cited significant increases in the production rate of low enriched uranium. Most concerning, it also cited "current undisclosed nuclear related activities involving military related organizations, including activities related to the development of nuclear payload for a missile." Wisconsin Project on Nuclear Arms control estimates that as of last April 2011, Iran's stockpile of low enriched uranium provides enough material to fuel four nuclear bombs. Additionally, the re-

port detailed a list of seven nuclear activities exclusive to a nuclear weapons program that Iran has refused to explain.

The report with respect to Syria outlines in detail the evidence it has collected of a suspected covert nuclear reactor building under construction in Syria which, as we know, was destroyed, thankfully, by Israel in September 2007. Syria has long denied that it was building a covert nuclear reactor and systematically denied the IAEA access to the site.

The level of specificity in the descriptions of the activities and the publicizing of information in each report suggests that the IAEA believes its evidence is credible. Thus, the nuclear ambitions of both Teheran and Damascus have been laid bare.

And while President Obama has said that Iran's acquisition of nuclear weapons is "unacceptable," some in the administration appear resigned to the eventuality that the regime will build a bomb and the goal is to delay, rather than force permanent verifiable dismantlement. Iran with a nuclear weapon or a nuclear breakout capacity would embolden Iran's pursuit of regional domination and could embolden the regime's proxies to develop comparable capabilities. It could also set the Middle East down a cascade of proliferation that is unacceptable to U.S. security, to our interests and vital allies, such as Israel.

President Obama stated that if the IAEA determines that Iran is noncompliant, "we will have no choice but to consider additional steps, including potentially additional sanctions, to intensify the pressure on the Iranian regime." Such steps would have to be immediate, comprehensive, and dramatic. They must not continue to give a pass to Russia, to China, or to the likes of Total, and must not be based on persuading the so-called "international community" to act collectively—meaning agreeing to the lowest common denominator while continuing to cultivate ties with the regime in Teheran.

Despite statements by outgoing Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg, who told the online publication The Cable that new congressional legislation expanding sanctions on Iran is unnecessary, it is vital that Congress act to close loopholes identified in the current sanctions structure and compel the executive branch to fully and unequivocally augment the pressure on Iran, Syria, and their enablers.

Last year, after a long, hard-fought struggle, the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act was enacted. Although weaker than some of us had hoped, this law represents a strong step forward, especially through its energy, refined petroleum, and financial sanctions. This congressionally-driven effort has led some countries, including the EU, Japan, Australia, and South Korea, to finally impose their own, albeit more limited, sanctions on Teheran.

Since the implementation of the 2003 Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act, my colleagues from both sides of the aisle and I have been calling for the full implementation of the menu of sanctions contained under that act.

To address the growing threats and compel the Iranian and Syrian regimes into abandoning their destructive policies, I have worked with my good friend, the distinguished ranking member,

Mr. Berman, and Congressman Sherman and Congressman Engel along with the other bipartisan colleagues in introducing legislation aimed at expanding and strengthening existing sanctions on Iran and Syria, and ensuring their full implementation and enforcement by the executive branch.

The tools we have must be used to their maximum effectiveness. We must look for new means of compelling both Iran and Syria to stop activities that threaten our security, our interests, and our allies. Our policies toward both Iran and Syria can no longer be bifurcated but must include an integrated, cohesive strategy with the singular goal of preventing Iran's and Syria's pursuit of nuclear and other non-conventional weapons, the missiles to deliver them, their sponsorship of terrorism, and other activities that threaten Americans, our interests, and our allies.

Addressing these threats require tough choices. I look forward to receiving the testimony of our witnesses today and listening to their recommendations of what the United States can do to definitively deny the Iran-Syria axis the wherewithal to continue their dangerous policies.

I am now pleased to yield to my friend Mr. Berman for his statement.

[The prepared statement of Chairman Ros-Lehtinen follows:]

Remarks of the Honorable Ileana Ros-Lehtinen
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs
Hearing on: "Iran and Syria: The Next Steps (Part 1)"
June 23, 2011

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Mr. BERMAN. Well, thank you very much, Madam Chairman. And you have truly convened an excellent panel on this subject. I look forward to hearing their testimony.

Iran and Syria are the world's two leading state sponsors of terrorism and present a broad range of threats to U.S. policy. None of these is of greater concern, however, than their programs for developing weapons of mass destruction.

We have devoted considerable time to the Iranian nuclear threat over the past two Congresses. It is critical we continue to do that. We face no greater long-term challenge to our national security than preventing the emergence of a nuclear-armed Iran. And that is why I am co-sponsoring your bill, Madam Chairman, the Iran Threat Reduction Act, which strengthens sanctions on those who assist Iran's nuclear program directly or indirectly.

We must be firm in our insistence that Iran meet its U.N. Security Council obligation to suspend uranium enrichment. We should seek to achieve that goal by peaceful means but with full awareness that in order to make our diplomacy as effective as possible, all options must remain on the table.

The United States and like-minded countries must do more to pressure other countries to implement U.N. sanctions on Iran, including a state-by-state effort to upgrade legal and practical export controls, greater effort to identify and take down Iran's front companies, an institution of catch-all controls to prevent the export of prohibited items for Iran's uranium enrichment program, including those that fall just below control thresholds but that could be upgraded and other similar measures.

On the home front, I am encouraged by recent sanctions imposed by the administration using the authorities established by Congress last year. The administration's actions have an important symbolic and deterrent effect, but I am still looking forward to the first energy-related sanctions on foreign companies that actually do business with the United States.

And, as I have said before, there is significant evidence that Chinese companies are engaged in sanctionable investment activities in Iran. I would like to see those companies sanctioned. Many other companies and nations have ceased doing business with Iran at our behest. We don't want them to get the idea that we are not really serious about sanctions.

As for Syrian efforts to construct an illicit and clandestine nuclear reactor, the decision by the IAEA earlier this month to refer Syria's noncompliance with its safeguards obligations to the U.N. Security Council was an important diplomatic achievement. The Security Council must take action to force Syria to come clean. I would like to see the administration pull out the stops to impose Security Council sanctions, though it will not be easy to overcome Russian and Chinese objections.

Russia should drop its objection to the public release of the recently completed panel of experts who are put on the Iran Commission by the U.N. Security Council. The world must know about Iran's nefarious efforts to elude sanctions, develop even longer-range missiles, and provide weapons to Syria.

I would like to say a further word about Syria in the context of the so-called Arab Spring. If we are honest about the wave of

uprisings over the past few months, we have to acknowledge they have evoked many conflicting emotions. On the one hand, they certainly do appeal to our and my democratic convictions and our bedrock values. On the other hand, we worry that they may produce regimes that are not supportive of our interests. And at the end of the day perhaps these regimes won't even be democratic.

In Egypt, for example, we are concerned that the new regime will be less committed to peace treaty with Israel. In majority Shiite Bahrain, we are concerned that a more democratic regime might be one that is closer to Iran, less hospitable to the U.S. Fifth Fleet.

In Yemen, there is the question of whether a new and hopefully more humane regime would protect our counterterrorism interests as well as President Saleh, not protect him, protect our counterterrorism interests as well as he has done. He hasn't done much else well. Never mind.

These are concerns, not conclusions, but they constitute some of the more prominent examples of Arab uprisings where values and interests compete for the upper hand in U.S. foreign policy to date. There is one Arab country, however, where I see in the protests the potential for remarkable merging of our most critical interests, our most fundamental values. That is Syria.

It is clear that the Assad regime through its murderous crackdown on armed civilians as they relinquish most or all of whatever legitimacy it may once have enjoyed among the Syrian people. Its demise would likely lead to the achievement of one of our most cherished strategic goals, breaking the bond between Damascus, on the one hand, and Teheran and Hezbollah, on the other.

That would deprive Iran of its primary base of operations in the Middle East and mark perhaps its first major strategic setback in the region. It would also mark a setback for Hezbollah. I don't think it would prevent Iran from arming Hezbollah altogether, but it would certainly make the job more difficult.

To the extent the new Syrian regime wants to be part of the international community, it also may very well break its link to Sunni terrorist groups like Hamas.

How do I know these desirable goals would be achieved with the fall of the Assad regime? I don't know for certain, but to the extent that the U.S. can influence the process, it is certainly worth the risk.

I reject arguments that we are better off with Assad in power. As for the claim that he is the devil we know, let's keep the following in mind. During his tenure, there has been no progress toward peace with Israel. Hezbollah has emerged as a major regional power. Iraqi extremists have used Syria as a safe haven. And Iran has established a beachhead in the Middle East while advising and assisting Assad in his murderous repression of civilians.

How much worse could the next devil be? The United States' ability to influence the course of events in Syria may be limited. We should use what tools we have and produce sanctions targeted at regime leaders and human rights abusers to make clear that our sympathies, our shared visions are with the victims, not the victimizers.

The administration has taken some important steps in that direction in recent weeks. One of these steps—I am getting near the

end here. I am almost done. One of these steps was the sanctioning last month of Cham Holding, the flagship enterprise of Assad's corrupt cousin Rami Makhlouf.

We should encourage the European Union, Syria's leading trading partner, to follow our lead in that regard. Makhlouf recently claimed he is giving up his various businesses. We and our friends should help them do that.

For years now, many strategists in this country have encouraged Syria-Israeli peacemaking for the primary purpose of breaking Syrian-Iranian tie and beginning the process of pushing Iran out of the Arab Middle East. We now have a historic opportunity to accomplish these goals. Even before the peacemaking begins, this is an opportunity we should not pass up.

I yield back. Thank you.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much, Mr. Berman, for that statement.

Mr. McCaul is recognized for 1 minute, the vice chair of the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere.

Mr. MCCAUL. Thank you Madam Chair. I will be very brief. Thanks to the witnesses for attending the hearing today. It is an important issue. I have always viewed Iran as one of the greatest threats that we have had, even prior to 9/11. And I look forward to the testimony. And, Madam Chair, thank you for holding this hearing.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you, sir.

Mr. Connolly of Virginia?

Mr. CONNOLLY. Thank you, Madam Chairman. And I want to welcome our witnesses today, particularly my old friend John Bolton. I was reminding him that I actually staffed his very first nomination hearing when he was in the Reagan administration a number of years ago. We are both a little grayer today. I want to thank you for holding this hearing.

As we look at sort of the unfolding Arab Spring, it is important not to be distracted by the fact that there are other very serious security issues and certainly in Syria and Iran.

I hope we will also explore the nuclear issue, not only in Iran, which is front and center, but also the disturbing report that was just issued about the now defunct Al-Kibar facility destroyed by Israel in Syria that seemed to have some North Korean links to it. The instability of both of these regimes is increasingly manifest, certainly in Syria but even in Iran in terms of the ongoing feud within that government. So I look forward to the testimony and our discussion.

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much.

Mr. Johnson of Ohio is recognized for 1 minute.

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you, Madam Chairman. And I want to thank our panel for being here today.

You know, we face major diplomatic challenges with both Syria and Iran. In recent years, it has become very clear that the engagement process started by the administration is not working. Since we started that policy, Syria has maintained its support for terrorism, facilitated the trafficking of weapons to Hezbollah in Lebanon, continued to commit human rights violations, and repeatedly

lied about its proliferation efforts. Similarly, Iran's support of far-flung terrorist activities and development of nuclear weapons have not been deterred by diplomatic efforts.

The second policy of economic pressure has had some effect on Iran's economy working to stall economic progress in the hopes of curbing their nuclear efforts. We should continue that. And I believe we need to reevaluate our current nonproliferation policy in the Middle East before escalating pressure on Israel triggers more drastic preventive measures in itself.

So I thank the panel for being here. Thank you.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you.

Mr. Sires of New Jersey is recognized.

Mr. SIRES. Thank you, Madam Chair. And thank you very much for being here.

I am also very concerned. Obviously both Iran and Syria, they just have no regards for international law. And they support terrorists at every turn. This is a concern for the security of this country. I am also very concerned.

And I would like to hear about Iran. How soon do you really think that they can build an atomic weapon? This is a big concern to many people in my community. So I will look forward to your testimony, and I thank you.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you, Mr. Sires.

Mr. Chabot is recognized for 3 minutes as the Subcommittee on Middle East and South Asia chairman.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you very much, Madam Chair. And thank you for calling this timely and very important hearing here this morning.

I continue to be extremely frustrated with the administration's Syria policy. In particular, I am frustrated with a lot of their other policies as well, but Syria I think maybe most of all.

President Obama's recent suggestion that Bashar al-Assad could remain in power if he makes the appropriate reforms is, at best, disappointing. I will leave it there.

By ruthlessly cracking down and indiscriminately killing peaceful protesters, Assad has betrayed his people and has lost all legitimacy. No piecemeal reforms can wash away the blood on his hands. And, yet, the administration still refuses to say aloud what the entire world sees so clearly. Assad is not a legitimate leader.

I have to confess that I find this lack of strength, clearness on the administration's part baffling. For years, Bashar al-Assad has allowed Syria to function as a freeway for terrorists.

Countless jihadists traveling to kill American soldiers in Iraq entered that country via Syria. Similarly, Iranian weapons have flowed freely across Syria's borders and into the hands of Hezbollah. It is horrifying to stop and consider how much blood American, Syrian, Iraqi, Lebanese, and Israeli the Assad regime has on its hands. And, yet, we continue to confer legitimacy.

Engagement has failed. And leading from behind is not leading at all. It is high time that the administration stands up and say what we all know to be true. Bashar must go.

Madam Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chabot.

Mr. Higgins of New York is recognized.

Mr. HIGGINS. Thank you, Madam Chair. And thank you for holding this hearing.

The world is watching these countries in the Middle East and North Africa struggle to transition into states more representative of the aspirations of the people. There are no two more powerful forces in the world today than youth and technology, which is driving in large part this change. And, as we are seeing the calls for democratic reform in both Iran and Syria and Iran, despite internet censorship, Iranians are some of the most prolific bloggers in the world, 80 percent of the country is literate.

With more than two-thirds of the population under the age of 30, the ability of Iran's dynamic population to plug in and play to the world's marketplace of ideas will continue to grow as a challenge to the country's autocratic regime.

And in Syria, decades of oppressive rule have begun to fray as a population. As New York Times columnist Tom Friedman writes, armed only with cell phone cameras and access to Facebook and YouTube, it will grow more and more difficult for the willing regimes to thwart the demands of their people, the demands for citizenship, for civil rights, and for opportunity.

Our foreign policy must be sensitive to these dynamic changes, encouraging freedom of thought and expression, particularly as more stable and self-determined states in the Middle East are likely to create a more stable world.

I look forward to discussing these issues with the witnesses before us today. And I yield back.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you, sir.

Ms. Schmidt of Ohio?

Ms. SCHMIDT. Thank you, Madam Chairman. I will be very brief.

I am here today to listen to the experts regarding Iran and Syria and what our next steps should be. We cannot ignore either one of these countries. They are the bad actors in the Middle East, and they are rogue states that make it very, very dangerous, not just for the folks in the Middle East, but for those in the world, so I'm eager to listen to the panelists.

Thank you. And I yield back.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much.

Now the Chair is pleased to welcome our witnesses. I would like to welcome back to our committee Ambassador John Bolton. I love John Bolton. Ambassador Bolton currently serves as a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute. His area of research is U.S. foreign and national security policy.

Prior to arriving at AEI, Ambassador Bolton served as the United States permanent representative to the United Nations from August 1, 2005, to December 9, 2006. From June 2001 to May 2005, Ambassador Bolton served as Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, also in the Bush administration. Prior to this, Ambassador Bolton was senior vice president of the American Enterprise Institute. Welcome back.

And we also would like to welcome back Dr. Olli Heinonen. Dr. Heinonen is currently a senior fellow, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs.

Before joining the Belfer Center as a senior fellow in August 2010, he spent 27 years at the International Atomic Energy Agency

in Vienna, with the last 5 years as deputy director general of the IAEA and head of its Department of Safeguards. He led the agency's efforts to identify and dismantle nuclear proliferation networks, including the one led by Pakistani scientist Dr. A.Q. Khan. And he oversaw its efforts to monitor and contain Iran's nuclear program. Welcome back, Doctor. Thank you.

And, finally, the committee would also like to welcome back Dr. Robert Satloff. Thank you, sir. The executive director of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, an expert on Arab and Islamic politics as well as U.S. Middle East policy, Dr. Satloff has written and spoken widely on the Arab-Israeli peace process, the Islamist challenge to the growth of democracy in the region, and the need for bold and innovative public diplomacy to Arabs and Muslims.

We thank you, gentlemen. And, please, we will enter your statements into the record. And be brief or I will gavel you down, even the ones I love. And I like you guys, too.

Mr. Bolton?

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JOHN BOLTON, SENIOR FELLOW, AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC POLICY RESEARCH (FORMER U.S. PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND FORMER UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ARMS CONTROL AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY)

Ambassador BOLTON. Thank you very much, Madam Chairman. Thank you for the invitation to appear before the committee, Congressman Berman, many old friends. I think this is a very important subject. I think Iran's nuclear weapons program remains one of the most important national security challenges we face. It has been trying to get nuclear weapons for close to 20 years. And, despite in the past 10 years some very vigorous efforts on the part of the United States to stop it, it is now closer than ever.

I just want to start by saying, you know, we all talk confidently about what Iran's capabilities are, what its centrifuges are doing, what its plans are. We are only talking, really, about what is publicly known. Our intelligence knows more, but our intelligence in Iran is far from perfect. And it is what we don't know about Iran's nuclear weapons program that particularly worries me.

I think the evidence is clear from years of efforts at diplomatic resolution to the Iranian nuclear program, that that is not going to work. We can see that years of efforts on economic sanctions have failed to have a material effect on the nuclear weapons program.

I am all in favor of the sanctions. I think anything that destabilizes the Iranian regime is a good thing because I think regime change in Teheran should be our national policy, but I don't think we can operate under the view that sanctions can stop the Iranian effort to achieve nuclear weapons in a timely way.

Look at North Korea. It is the most heavily sanctioned regime on the planet. It has exploded two nuclear devices. We know that its nuclear weapons program continues. It has now admitted again, as it did 8 years ago, it has a functioning uranium enrichment program. It is working ahead on its ballistic missile programs, all the

most friendless regime on Earth. Iran has many more resources that economic sanctions are not going to stop.

So I think what this means, unfortunately, is that the most likely outcome as of now for Iran is that in a very short period of time, it is going to get nuclear weapons absent some dramatic step by an outsider. And I think the change that this will have in the world is almost impossible to calculate. I think it is very important to understand just what a dramatic step it will be if Iran crosses the nuclear weapons threshold.

First, it doesn't have to be the case that Iran actually uses nuclear weapons. Simply having that capability in the region will have a profound effect. Imagine, for example, how we would have treated the breakup of Yugoslavia if Milosevic had had nuclear weapons. And then think of the possibility of weapons in the hands of the regime in Teheran.

Second, it is a mistake to believe that American security guarantees to our friends and allies in the region against the possible Iranian program are going to provide much assurance at all. I think the outlook as of today is declining American influence in the region. I think our security guarantees are declining in value as well.

Third, I think it is a big mistake to conclude, as I believe the administration has, that a nuclear Iran can be contained and deterred. The psychology of the regime in Teheran is very different from the psychology of the Soviet Union during the Cold War. It is an asymmetric threat as well. And it would be foolish to look forward to a world in which we are at the discretion of the rulers in Teheran.

But, even if I am wrong on that and Iran can be contained and deterred, it doesn't stop with Iran. If Iran gets nuclear weapons, Saudi Arabia will get nuclear weapons. Egypt will. Turkey will and perhaps others. And you are going to have a very, very widespread proliferation of nuclear weapons in the Middle East.

That is why I think we have honestly to confront the very unattractive alternative that absent military action against Iran's nuclear weapons program, Iran will have nuclear weapons much sooner, rather than later.

No one likes to contemplate this possibility, but there are only two options that currently exist in my view. One is that Iran gets nuclear weapons. The other is the preemptive use of force against them.

Let me just touch briefly on Syria. I recount in my testimony, Madam Chairman, your hearing back in September of '03, when I tried to warn about the interest of Syria in nuclear weapons. It was very controversial testimony. It was a very controversial issue in my confirmation hearing to be ambassador to the U.N. because Senator Biden and others thought that I had over-stressed the danger of the Syrian nuclear weapons program.

I think the point was very well-handled when the Israeli defense forces destroyed a North Korean reactor—I underline a North Korean reactor—being built in Syria. We still don't know what else is going on there, but I think there is every reason to believe that Syria, Iran, and North Korea have cooperated on other aspects of nuclear weapons programs there as well.

So this threat is not simply an Iranian threat. It is a global threat. Syria is a piece of it. And I think the United States underestimates this threat at its peril.

Thank you very much, Madam Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Bolton follows:]

Prepared Statement of

John R. Bolton

Senior Fellow,
American Enterprise Institute

before the

Committee on Foreign Affairs
United States House of Representatives

on

Iran and Syria: Next Steps

10:00 A.M.
June 23, 2011
Room 2172
Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C.

Madam Chairman and Members of the Committee, I would like to thank you very much for the invitation to appear before you today to discuss next steps on Iran and Syria. I have a prepared statement, which I will summarize, and ask that it be inserted in the record. I would, of course, be pleased to answer any questions that you or other Members of the Committee might have.

The Iranian nuclear weapons program, and its potential linkages to Syria, remains one of the most critical national-security challenges facing America, perhaps even the gravest near-term threat. After nearly twenty years of fruitless U.S. and Western efforts to prevent Iran from achieving its objective of deliverable nuclear weapons, we are now at a critical point. Iran is very close to reaching its goals, through its own efforts, its collaboration with North Korea and other rogue states like Venezuela that allow it to evade international pressure, and its hegemony over Syria, where the extent of its nuclear activities is largely unknown. Even as Iran's efforts rapidly near success, the United States may yet prevent the emergence of a nuclear Iran. But time is short, and we will surely fail if we continue to pursue our present policies. Once Iran gets nuclear weapons, the Middle East and the larger world will change forever, and much to the disadvantage of the United States, and its friends and allies worldwide.

IRAN

We should begin with blunt truths about Iran's nuclear weapons program. Despite years of diplomatic negotiations, multiple layers of international sanctions, and creative efforts at disruption (including, most recently, the Stuxnet computer virus), Iran's seemingly inexorable march toward nuclear weapons continues. The Pasdaran, Iran's Revolutionary Guards Corps, recently published on its website a story about the world's reaction the day after Iran's first

nuclear test.[1] Estimates based on publicly available information differ, but the theme underlying them all is entirely pessimistic, especially concerning Iran's vigorous uranium enrichment program. Iran is not only expanding its production capacity for enriched uranium, but is moving to ever-more sophisticated centrifuge designs that will allow its future enrichment production to be much larger than at present. By almost all standards, uranium enrichment is "the long pole in the tent" when it comes to fashioning nuclear weapons, and there is little or nothing, except imminent regime change in Tehran or external military intervention, that can prevent that outcome. While more work is obviously required once the concentration of U235 isotopes has been enriched to weapons-grade levels ("HEU," or "highly enriched uranium"), such as converting it into uranium metal, fabricating that metal into a form usable for a nuclear weapon, and then building the final weapon itself, it is uranium enrichment that is the principal process to be mastered.

The most recent Iran report by the International Atomic Energy Agency ("IAEA"), May 24, 2011, concludes that Iran's production rate for low-enriched uranium ("LEU," containing approximately 3.5 % of the critical U235 isotope) is now 105 kilograms per month. That figure represents a 17 percent increase in production from the IAEA's previous report in February of this year, and an 84 percent increase over 2009. And these figures, of course, are based only on the Iranian enrichment capacity that the IAEA can verify.

Independent researchers across the political spectrum also confirm just how close Iran is to having nuclear weapons. The Wisconsin Project on Nuclear Arms Control's "Iran Watch" estimates that by April of this year, Iran had enough LEU for four nuclear weapons, assuming

[1] Jamsheed K. Choksy, "Iran Postulates First Nuclear Test," Forbes.com, June 14, 2011, referring to an April 24, 2011 posting on the IRGC's Gerdab website. The Forbes article may be found at http://www.forbes.com/2011/06/14/nuclear-iran-is-inevitable.html .

Iran further processed it into HEU, or weapons-grade uranium, (typically with U235 concentrations over 90 percent). Using only the 8,000 centrifuges observed by the IAEA at Natanz, the Wisconsin project estimates that it would take 1.5 months to convert enough LEU into HEU to make one bomb, or six months to make four bombs. All of the Wisconsin Project's assumptions and calculations are spelled out transparently on its web page,[2] and are based on publicly available information, typically from the IAEA. Should Iran have additional facilities not known to the IAEA, of course, with more centrifuges operating than those under IAEA observation at Natanz, its capacity to enrich to HEU would obviously be greater, and the time required shorter. In that regard, Iran recently claimed it would triple its production of uranium enriched to 19.75 percent U235,[3] allegedly for its Tehran research reactor, using the Fordow facility, deeply buried in a mountainside near Qom, and revealed by United States intelligence in 2009.

Using the May 24, 2011 IAEA report as a basis, the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center ("NPEC") has published the latest in a series of reports estimating Iran's proximity to weapons production.[4] NPEC concludes that, "[w]ith Iran's current number of operating centrifuges, the batch recycling would take about two months once Iran decided to initiate the process" to enrich enough LEU into HEU for one nuclear weapon. Similarly, the Federation of

[2] See Wisconsin Project on Nuclear Arms Control, Iran Watch, updated May 25, 2011, found at http://www.iranwatch.org/ourpubs/articles/iransnuclcartimetable.html .

[3] See David E. Sanger and William J. Broad, "Iran Says It Will Speed Up Uranium Enrichment," *New York Times*, June 8, 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/09/world/middleeast/09iran.html .

[4] Greg S. Jones, "Out of the Spotlight, Iran's Rate of Enriched Uranium Production Continues to Increase: Centrifuge Enrichment and the IAEA May 24, 2011 Update," found at http://www.npolicy.org/article.php?aid=1043&tid=4 .

American Scientists had concluded even earlier this year that Iran's production of LEU had increased substantially over previous years.[5]

Other aspects of Iran's weapons program have also continued unabated, and quite likely did so even after 2003, despite the conclusions of the 2007 National Intelligence Estimate ("NIE") that Iran had suspended its nuclear weapons program in that year. The United States has still not explicitly rejected the 2007 NIE, including in the recently released 2011 update, although this highly politicized and poorly reasoned document has not withstood the test of time. Leaders of the intelligence community, and now the Obama Administration, have been reluctant to reverse its erroneous conclusions publicly, but in substance, top U.S. intelligence officials and policy makers no longer operate in accordance with its conclusions. Indeed, in substance if not in express terms, it was rejected as early as February, 2008, in Congressional testimony by Michael McConnell, the then-Director of National Intelligence.

Even publicly available information at the time the 2007 NIE was published contradicted its conclusion. On September 15, 2004, for example, ABC News reported a story about Iran's armor and artillery weapons-testing facility at Parchin, describing activity consistent with nuclear weapons development. According to the report, Iranian scientists and technicians were testing detonation devices for the high explosives that surround a uranium or plutonium "pit" in the "physics package" of a nuclear weapon." Simultaneous detonation of the high explosives is required to ensure that the weapons-grade metal implodes in a way that ensures that the critical mass of fissile material produces the maximum possible explosive force. No one ever contracted

[5] The FAS report (Ivanka Barzashka, "Using Enrichment Capacity to Estimate Iran's Breakout Potential") can be found at: http://www.fas.org/pubs/_docs/IssueBrief_Jan2011_Iran.pdf .

the ABC News story, which was reporting on contemporaneous, ongoing operations, not historical evidence.

Unfortunately, it is almost certainly correct that there is much else concerning the Iranian nuclear weapons program that has escaped our attention. We should openly acknowledge that our intelligence on Iran is far from perfect. Indeed, we are continually learning of Iranian efforts to build new nuclear facilities, hidden both from Western intelligence capabilities and from international inspectors from the IAEA. What we don't know is not good news. There can be little doubt that whatever additional activities Iran is pursuing will only increase the likelihood that it is approaching a deliverable nuclear weapons capability, and must undercut any confident assertions that we know with certainty when Iran will in fact achieve its long-sought objectives. The only prudent approach to assessing what we know and don't know about Iran is that the risks are almost certainly greater than what we have in our intelligence base or what it discussed in our media and other public *fora*.

One bright spot is that, fortunately, the IAEA has re-emerged under its new Director General, Yukiya Amano, from a disturbing period of willful blindness at its top level. Amano has honestly and openly described Iran's stonewalling and deception against the IAEA over many years. He has been forthright in describing the potential weapons implications of what the IAEA has found during its years of inspections, and also, importantly, in characterizing what Iran has refused to answer, covered up or concealed concerning possible weapons-related activities. The changing dynamic at the IAEA can only be applauded, although there are years of failure that Amano must struggle to overcome.

Moreover, even apart from its uranium-enrichment program, Iran is also poised in the coming years to take advantage of plutonium from spent nuclear reactor fuel for weapons purposes. The Bushehr nuclear reactor, is moving toward full operational status, under Russian control and supervision, and marks a historic milestone in the region. It is the first commercial-scale reactor (1,000 megawatts gross capacity) in the hands of an avowed enemy of Israel that has been allowed to begin functioning. Although supposedly "proliferation resistant," it is still capable of producing sufficient plutonium from its spent fuel to provide Iran with an alternative path to nuclear weapons, as our own Department of Energy has concluded. Tehran now claims that Bushehr will be connected to the national electrical grid in August, marking its full operation for commercial purposes, and there are plans for many more reactors to be constructed.

In fact, although the term "axis of evil" may have fallen out of use in recent years, the connection between North Korea and Iran, certainly with respect to ballistic missiles, and quite likely with respect to nuclear weapons, remains strong. Whether there are also other countries, such a Venezuela and Burma, now involved in these clandestine nuclear activities remains certain but entirely possible. Venezuela's deposits of uranium, worldwide the second largest only to Canada among proven reserves, makes it an attractive partner for Iran and other rogue states. Hugo Chavez's increasingly close relations with Iran can only be troubling, not only because of the support Chavez provides to Iran's successful campaign to evade international financial and other sanctions, but because of the risk that Venezuela will pursue its own nuclear program, and perhaps ultimately nuclear weapons. Burma's geographic location makes it an excellent place for vessels travelling between Iran and North Korea to stop and reprovision, and the country's isolation could also facilitate the construction of facilities involved in its own or other countries' nuclear weapons efforts.

Just a few weeks ago, Iran launched its second earth satellite (the first having been launched in 2009). While there is still considerable work required before Iran would be able to mate a nuclear weapon onto a ballistic missile for delivery as a payload, Iran's capabilities to do just that are accelerating. And when we consider North Korea's progress toward the same delivery capability, and the extent of cooperation between Iran and North Korea on missile development over the years, we should indeed be gravely concerned.

Just as one recent example of disturbing information, on May 25, the U.N. Economic and Social Council for Asia and the Pacific ("ESCAP") decided to approve a "disaster information management center" in Iran, which the United States had consistently opposed since Iran first suggested it in 2006. Since early warning about impending disasters is critical to mitigating the harm caused, remote sensing techniques by satellite are extremely useful in the disaster context. Under this humanitarian guise, Iran will now undoubtedly benefit in enhancing its scientific capabilities in both satellite and missile technologies. When these risks were raised with a State Department spokesman after the vote, he would say only, "Those are all legitimate questions. But we can't talk about them."[6] Clearly, our government recognizes the risks involved here, but so feeble are our efforts that we cannot even prevent a country under multiple Security Council sanctions from winning designation to host such a center.

The unavoidable conclusion from twenty years of failure to stop Iran's nuclear weapons program is grim. The most likely outcome is that Iran will, in fact, achieve a deliverable, nuclear-weapons capability, and much sooner than later. I fear that many in the current Administration believe that, as undesirable as a nuclear Iran would be, it is a situation we can

[6] *See* George Russell, "U.N. Approves Iran's Disaster Center Proposal Which Some Fear Could Boost Its Ballistic Capabilities. June 17,2011, found at http://www.foxnews.com/world/2011/06/17/un-program-helps-green-light-iran-nuclear-weapons-program/#ixzz1Piv9aEfK.

accept and live with. Under this analysis, U.S. security guarantees to Israel, members of the Gulf Cooperation Council ("GCC") and others will allow us to contain and deter Iran, as we contained and deterred the Soviet Union during the Cold war. I believe this analysis is fundamentally flawed.

First, whether or not Iran ever actually used nuclear weapons, its mere possession of them, or the perception that it possessed them, would radically alter the balance of power in the Middle East and beyond. Linked with Iran's aggressive financing and arming of terrorist groups -- Hezbollah, Hamas, terrorists in Iraq and even the Taliban in Afghanistan -- a nuclear Iran could dramatically increase its influence in the Gulf and the broader region, to the decided detriment of Israel, the GCC states and other U.S. friends and allies. Iran's aggressive pursuit of regional hegemony in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Bahrain and among Palestinians and in the internal conflicts within Islam, will be immeasurable strengthened merely by possessing a nuclear weapons capability.

Second, American security guarantees in today's environment are not likely to provide much reassurance. The United States' broad retreat from the Middle East -- from Iraq and now quite possibly from Afghanistan -- is hardly reassuring to others seeking security assurances. And America's disdain for Israel, its truest ally in the region, can hardly be comforting to those who have never enjoyed such close relations. If this is how the United States now treats close friends, how will it treat mere allies of convenience when convenience disappears? Our feckless and irresolute policy in Libya can hardly be helping either.

Third, the calculus of deterrence for the Iranian regime originating from the Islamic Revolution of 1979 is quite different from that for the Soviet Union during the Cold War. On the

psychological level, for example, a theocratic regime that values life in the hereafter more than life on earth is not likely to be subject to classic theories of deterrence, which rest after all on ending life on earth for the aggressor.

Moreover, deterrence during the Cold War existed between two superpowers with symmetrical destructive capabilities, whereas Iran even under the most expansive predictions will possess only a small asymmetric nuclear threat in the near term. That means its nuclear weapons will not really be military, but will instead be weapons of terrorism, a threat not to military targets but to our innocent civilians. Iran's extensive record of funding and arming international terrorists, and itself engaging in terrorism, should be warning enough that its leaders are fully capable of nuclear terrorism as well.

And as if this were not sufficient, any realistic reading of Cold War history should not give us boundless confidence that deterrence is automatically successful, as any number of Cold War "near misses" proved just how fragile deterrence is as a concept. No one has yet explained why we should comfortably allow our collective futures to be held hostage to the whims of religious extremists in Tehran or rogue regimes elsewhere.

Third, even if I am mistaken, and Iran can be contained and deterred, the Middle Eastern nuclear weapons threat doesn't stop with Iran. If Iran obtains nuclear weapons, then almost certainly Saudi Arabia will do the same, as will Egypt, Turkey and perhaps others in the region, and we risk this widespread proliferation even if it is a democratic Iran that possesses nuclear weapons. Thus, in a very short period of time, perhaps five to ten years, the Middle East could contain half a dozen or more nuclear weapons states, an inherently dangerous and unstable situation. Moreover, the risk that Pakistan's arsenal of nuclear weapons might also fall into the

hands of extremists, a risk dramatically heightened if instability in Afghanistan persists and permeates Pakistan, could also well play a destabilizing role in the Middle East. It is precisely because of this enormous risk of the wider proliferation of nuclear arsenals that we must bend every effort to stop Iran in the first instance.

Economic sanctions certainly have a worthwhile role in undermining the regime in Tehran, hopefully weakening it over time until it falls. There is little doubt that the regime is increasingly unpopular in Iran, that it is increasingly divided within itself, and that sanctions may well stoke the simmering discontent. The problem, however, is that regime change will likely take time, probably more time than we have before Iran achieves a nuclear weapons capability. We should not let the pursuit of sanctions obscure the reality that, while imposing economic costs on Tehran, they have not materially impeded the weapons effort. We should, therefore, suffer no illusions that sanctions are a truly effective response to Iran's continuing march toward nuclear weapons status. It is worth remembering that North Korea is today the most heavily sanctioned nation on the planet, and it has successfully detonated two nuclear devices and continues to pursue aggressively its ballistic missile program.

Since diplomacy has failed,[7] since sanctions have failed,[8] and since disruptive efforts have failed, the only realistic alternative, and it is a decidedly unhappy one, is to use force pre-

[7] Consider for example the "agreement in principle" announced in the fall of 2009 to send some of Iran's LEU to Russia for enrichment to 19.75 percent U235 in order to fuel the Tehran research Reactor. Widely touted at the time as a major diplomatic breakthrough on the Iranian nuclear program, the agreement has come to nothing, as some predicted. See, John R. Bolton, "Iran's Big Victory in Geneva," *Wall Street Journal*, October 5, 2009, page A19, column 5.

[8] "For Washington, the question should not be whether 'strict sanctions' will cause some economic harm despite Iran's multifarious, accelerating efforts to mitigate them. Instead, we must ask whether that harm will be sufficient to dissuade Iran from pursuing nuclear weapons. Objectively, there is no reason to believe that it will." John R. Bolton, "Sanctions Won't Work Against Iran," *Wall Street Journal*, September 1, 2009, page A17, column 1.

emptively against Iran's nuclear weapons program. I have written extensively about this possibility elsewhere, and will not dwell on it here today, except to make the following points:

> -- "An Israeli decision to use force, if it comes to that, will be neither precipitate nor disproportionate, but only a last resort in anticipatory self-defense. Arab governments already understand that logic and largely share it themselves.... Nonetheless, the intellectual case for that strike must be better understood in advance by the American public and Congress in order to ensure a sympathetic reaction by Washington."[9]
>
> -- "However much they might publicly protest, nearby Arab states would privately welcome an Israeli attack. These governments fear Iran's nuclear program as much as Israel does, but they are powerless to stop it. If Israel does the job, they are in a perfect place: Iran's nuclear program will be badly damaged, and they will have another opportunity to criticize Israel. This also explains why Arabs will not interdict Israeli overflights to and from Iran."[10]
>
> -- Iran will likely retaliate, but its most likely strategic option will be to unleash Hamas and Hezbollah against Israel, rather than the more dramatic scenarios that have been suggested, such as trying to close the Strait of Hormuz. Such retaliation enormously complicates Israel's strategic calculus, but also demonstrates the danger of allowing Iran to actually acquire nuclear weapons. Once that happens, any possible Iranian belligerence becomes that much more threatening and dangerous.[11]

The use of force is a decidedly unattractive option, but since the only other realistic assessment is that Iran will soon have a nuclear weapons capability, it has to be taken seriously.

There is little doubt in my mind that the Obama Administration will not use force against Iran's nuclear weapons program. That means that the burden of decision will fall on Israel, which would face a literally existential threat should Iran achieve nuclear weapons. Israel has never before, until the start-up of the Bushehr reactor, let any hostile state get close enough to achieving that objective to know what lies ahead. But if Israel does not strike, we will have to consider the implications of a nuclear Iran, and a likely multi-polar nuclear Middle East.

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[9] John R. Bolton, "Get Ready for a Nuclear Iran," *Wall Street Journal*, May 3, 2010, Page A21, column 5.

[10] John R. Bolton, "Iran Outlook: Grim," *National Review*, October 19, 2009, page 30, at 32.

[11] *See* John R. Bolton, "What If Israel Strikes Iran?," *Wall Street Journal*, June 11, 2009, page A13, column 1.

SYRIA

This hearing marks the first time I have discussed Syria's WMD programs before this Committee since September 16, 2003, when I was Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, and presented testimony in both open and closed sessions.[12] You may recall that that testimony because a subject of considerable controversy during my confirmation hearings as U.N. Ambassador, when Senator Joseph Biden, among others, took issue with what I testified about Syria's nuclear programs. This was during a period, of course, when the Bush Administration was under intense criticism for "politicizing" intelligence, and allegedly bending intelligence analysis to reach conclusions favorable to already-decided policy positions.

In my case, the criticism was that I was overstating the dangers of Syrian involvement in nuclear weapons, essentially because, according to the critics, Syria had neither the financial resources not the technological capabilities to engage in an extensive or potentially threatening nuclear weapons program. Senator Biden and others wanted to see not only my fully cleared testimony, both the classified and unclassified versions, but also earlier drafts and e-mails containing reactions to and comments upon those drafts. As is typical for the Executive Branch, the Bush Administration resisted turning over such documents, although discussions were underway about a potential compromise when the President decided to grant me a recess appointment. I can now confidently say, in retrospect, that I wish we had indeed turned over all of the materials in question, and that the intelligence about Syria's program on which I rested my

[12] The seven-page unclassified testimony may be found at: John R. Bolton, "Syria's Weapons of Mass Destruction and Missile Development Programs," Testimony before the House International Relations Committee, Subcommittee on the Middle East and Central Asia, September 16, 2003. http://2001-2009.state.gov/t/us/rm/24135.htm . The classified version was twenty pages long.

testimony, some of which was not cleared to be included in the testimony, could have become public in 2003.

Just four years later, Israel's September 6, 2007, destruction of the Syrian nuclear reactor at al Kibar being constructed by North Koreans, essentially a clone of the North's Yongbyon reactor, dramatically changed the public landscape concerning Syria and nuclear weapons. What Israel had discovered was unquestionably a nuclear reactor almost certainly intended for only one purpose: to produce plutonium for nuclear weapons, just as Yongbyon was. This was obviously a serious threat to Israel, and one the Israel Defense Forces decisively eliminated, as they had previously eliminated Saddam Hussein's Osirak reactor outside of Baghdad in 1981. What was unclear in 2007, and what remains unclear today, is what, if any, other nuclear-related activities are underway in Syria, and what their connections might be to Iran and North Korea.

Iran's dominance over key aspects of Syria's national security, and Syria's critical relationship to Lebanon and Iran's Lebanese proxy, the terrorist group Hezbollah, lead me to believe that we will conclude one day that the reactor was a three-way joint venture between Iran, North Korea, and Syria. After all, looking at the two-fold criticism of my 2003 concerns about Syria' s potential interest in nuclear weapons -- lack of technology and lack of resources, -- North Korea could surely supply the former and Iran could surely supply the latter. The possibility that a nuclear infrastructure to support the reactor's operation, such as for processing raw uranium fuel, fuel-fabrication facilities, and reprocessing plants to extract plutonium from the spent nuclear fuel, is one that the United States and the IAEA should continue to investigate, on an urgent basis.

Moreover, both Iran and North Korea shared a fundamental common interest: hiding their illicit nuclear activities from prying international eyes. What better place to conceal such activities than in a country where no one was looking, namely Syria? Having hidden al Kibar from the IAEA and the rest of the world (except for Israeli intelligence), Syria has, since the Israeli bombing in 2007, essentially refused any meaningful cooperation with the IAEA or any other outside party to answer questions about the bombed reactor site or other questionable activities in country. Accordingly, Syria has recently been referred to the UN Security Council, although I have no faith that the Council will deal any more effectively with Syria than it has with Iran since the Security Council received a similar IAEA referral in 2006.

As in other examples of the "Arab Spring," there has been considerable opposition to the authoritarian Ba'ath party regime that has long controlled Syria. As has been the family habit, President Bashir al-Assad and his government have resorted to repression, repeatedly using deadly force against innocent civilian protestors. What distinguishes Syria from other contemporary examples of repression, however, is the near certainty that Iran is doing everything it can, which is considerable, to keep the Assad regime in power. Just as Tehran was willing to use violence against its own innocent civilians in order to keep its hold on power after the fraudulent July, 2009 presidential elections, so too numerous reports have indicated that Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps personnel have been involved in assisting Assad in suppressing the insurrection in Syria.

Iran has clear and important strategic interests in keeping Assad in power, not least of which are maintaining its hegemony over Syria and protecting its unrestricted access to Hezbollah and Lebanon. But there may also be other reasons for Iran's visible involvement in suppressing the Syrian dissident movement, related to safeguarding Iran's own nuclear weapons

program and whatever weapons-related activities in addition to the reactor might be underway in Syria. If so, the stakes for Iran in Syria are very high indeed.

In the United States, many observers have asked why the Obama Administration was prepared to intervene in Libya under the "responsibility to protect" doctrine, but not in Syria. Some believe that the Obama Administration still clings to the badly mistaken idea that Assad really is a reformer and may yet be persuade to moderate his regime's behavior. That may be one part of the Administration's thinking, but I believe it also believes, correctly, that using force against the Assad regime may well be tantamount to using force against Iran, which could well generate an even wider conflict. Whatever the rationale, U.S. military or NATO intervention in Syria seems unlikely. Indeed, our incoherent and ineffective policies in Libya have created an unusual coalition here in Congress even against removing Muammar Qaddafi from power.

It is also possible that the nuclear activity in Syria does in fact represent a nuclear program that is entirely its own, independent of Iran's control, however unlikely this may seem. If so, given Iran's influence over Syrian policies, any Syrian nuclear capability would simply constitute one more incentive for other Arab states to develop their own nuclear weapons capacities. And given Syria's border with Israel, there is manifestly no good news for Jerusalem whatever the explanation for Syria's nuclear involvement.

CONCLUSION

Nuclear proliferation in the Middle East poses enormous risks for the United States, its friends and its allies. We have squandered too much time -- nearly twenty years -- trying to "engage" Iran in diplomacy, all to no avail. The net effect of all of our diplomacy, and that of the Europeans, has been to provide Iran a cloak of legitimacy and the critical element of time,

under whose shelter they have made impressive progress toward achieving a deliverable nuclear weapons capability. Our current options to prevent that outcome -- either regime change or the use of force against Iran's nuclear sites -- are unattractive, difficult and uncertain.

Unfortunately, however, by pursuing misbegotten policies for so long, we are largely responsible for our current predicament. We may yet prevent Iran, or surrogates like Syria, from obtaining nuclear weapons, but our time to do so is limited, and growing ever shorter. We can only hope that, years from now, we do not look back at the past decade and conclude that these were the years when America, by its failure, made the world safe for nuclear proliferation.

Thank you again, Madam Chairman, for the opportunity to testify this morning. I would be pleased to try to respond to any questions the Committee might have.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much, Ambassador.

Dr. Heinonen, thank you.

STATEMENT OF MR. OLLI HEINONEN, SENIOR FELLOW, BELFER CENTER FOR SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, HARVARD UNIVERSITY (FORMER DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY AND HEAD OF ITS DEPARTMENT OF SAFEGUARDS)

Mr. HEINONEN. Chairwoman Ros-Lehtinen and Congressman Berman, distinguished members of the committee, thank you for inviting me to address this hearing today.

In my testimony, I intend to provide a snapshot of where the nuclear programs of Iran and Syria currently stand and highlight some of the key implications. Let me start with Iran.

Iran's nuclear program is disturbingly much further down the road today than when its nuclear this year was first brought to the IAEA Board of Governors' attention in 2003. Before that, Iran was engaged in clandestine nuclear activities almost for two decades. The world discovered that Iran was secretly building an enrichment plant in Natanz.

Iran's history of clandestine nuclear pursuit, continuing enrichment and unresolved military related questions really reveal a comprehensive and committed approach that puts it on the path to achieving nuclear weapons' capability.

Today, the Natanz plant is an industrial sized enrichment facility with 8,000 installed IR–1 centrifuges. Since 2007, the plant has produced a total of 9,050 pounds, of 3.5 percent, enriched uranium. Since February 2010, Iran began enriching uranium to 20 percent. Two weeks ago, Iran announced that it will transfer production of 20 percent enriched uranium from Natanz to Fordow, where it plans to triple the production.

The Fordow facility was another nuclear installation that Iran built in secrecy until evidence of its construction surfaced in September 2009. In addition, Iran has announced that it would be constructing up to 10 new enrichment sites, but has not provided details about its plans nor locations.

The significance of these developments is several-fold. Although there have been also ups and downs in this nuclear program and delays, there will be such delays also in the future. But, first, given the current and planned production rates on its declared available uranium stock, Iran can be expected to possess 550 pounds of 20 percent enriched uranium by the end of 2012. This means that Iran would have subsequent uranium stocks, if further enriched and converted, to produce 275 to 330 pounds of high enriched uranium metal.

Iran is also moving ahead, albeit with delay, on its heavy water reactor program. This means being able to produce weapons-grade plutonium, sufficient for one nuclear device per year from 2014 onwards.

Second, Iran's suspected military-related studies on: Special neutron sources without civilian applications, high explosives with precise timing, and missile re-entry vehicle design, alongside with the procurement, design, and manufacturing of nuclear-related equipment by military entities, add a dangerous dimension.

Third, the possibility of secret nuclear facilities existing in parallel present a deeply troubling scenario.

Now I want to turn to Syria.

Syria's nuclear dossier was brought to public attention in 2007, when a facility in Dair Alzour, suspected to house a clandestine nuclear reactor, was destroyed by aerial bombing. Information gathered indicates that the destroyed facility had a reactor design similar to that of a five-megawatt nuclear reactor built by the DPRK in Yongbyon.

Apart from one restricted visit, Syria has refused to allow inspectors back to the Dair Alzour site. Questions remain concerning Syria's nuclear program. Was the destroyed reactor built on the Dair Alzour site the only clandestine facility? Are the uranium particles found in Damascus and at Dair Alzour a sign of more substance activities yet to be uncovered? Et cetera.

The Dair Alzour reactor no longer exists, but the IAEA needs to know the full picture to ensure that all nuclear material and facilities in Syria are declared and its nuclear activities are peaceful. It is, therefore, not a closed book.

Both Iranian and Syrian nuclear dossiers have been referred to U.N. Security Council. Subsequent Security Council resolutions would benefit from provisions that would oblige member states to provide information relating to proliferation activities and nuclear programs of the two countries.

It is important that the Security Council reinforces the IAEA's request for full and unimpeded access to all relevant information, including claimed military sites or personnel.

When it comes to the technical assessments made on nuclear programs, that standard cannot be compromised. In the case of Syria, the IAEA should have used all inspection rights it has, including conducting special inspection. The U.N. Security Council could also choose to provide wider authorities to the IAEA.

Iran and Syria must be encouraged to turn to a different path on their nuclear programs. Iran and Syria must understand they bear responsibility for the choices they make and the consequences generated.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Heinonen follows:]

US House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs:
Iran and Syria: Next Steps

Testimony by Olli J. Heinonen
Senior Fellow
Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs
Harvard Kennedy School

Chairwoman Ros-Lehtinen, Congressman Berman, distinguished members of the Committee, thank you for inviting me back to address this hearing on "Iran and Syria : Next Steps".

In my short testimony today, I will focus on the nuclear dossiers of Iran and Syria. I intend to provide a snapshot of where the nuclear programs of Iran and Syria currently stand and highlight some key implications.

Let me begin by drawing on a few commonalities the two nuclear programs share. Both Iran and Syria have reneged on their nuclear non-proliferation commitments, and both have been found non-compliant with their safeguards agreements. Iran and Syria have obfuscated rather than shed light on their nuclear activities. They have engaged in a policy of concealment, limited cooperation, and stonewalling. They have disregard requests and resolutions imposed on their respective nuclear programs. They have bought time. They have brazenly challenged the nuclear non-proliferation regime. They continue to face increasing international censure.

I shall now address the Iran and Syria cases respectively.

Iran's nuclear program is disturbingly much further down the road today than when it was first brought before the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board of Governors in 2003. Prior to this, Iran had already engaged in clandestine nuclear activities for close to two decades. We should not forget the long history and shroud of secrecy that continues to give serious concerns and raise unanswered questions. For the purpose of this testimony, I will use the benchmark of 2003 when the Iranian nuclear program was exposed and brought before the international community. Since then, despite numerous rounds of IAEA and UN

Security Council resolutions, Iran has continued to close the gap in reaching nuclear weapons capability.

In 2003, Iran had an enrichment plant in Natanz under construction, and had secretly conducted small scale uranium enrichment tests. The Arak heavy water reactor project was announced by Iran in late 2003, to serve as a replacement for its aging Tehran Research Reactor (TRR).

Today, Iran's Natanz plant is a fully functioning industrial-sized enrichment facility with 8000 installed IR-1 centrifuges. Since 2007, the Natanz plant has produced a total of 4100 kg (9050 pounds) of low enriched (3.5 % U-235) uranium hexafluoride or UF6, a chemical form of uranium that is used during the uranium enrichment process. Since February 2010, Iran began enriching uranium to a higher level, at 20 % U-235[1]. Two weeks ago in early June, Mr. F. Abbasi Davani, the new Head of the Iranian Atomic Energy Organization, announced that Iran will transfer its production of 20 % enriched uranium from Natanz to another facility in Fordow, near Qom[2], where it plans to triple production. The Fordow facility was an installation which Iran had built in secrecy without informing the IAEA until Iran was presented with evidence of its construction in September 2009[3]. In addition, Iran has announced that it would be constructing up to 10 new enrichment sites in the coming years, but has not provided details about its plans nor locations.

The significance of the above is several-fold. First, enriching uranium to 20% U-235 dramatically closes the step to producing high-enriched uranium, both in terms of the necessary technology mastered as well as the time needed to convert the UF6 to bomb-grade material[4]. Second, the current stockpile of 20% enriched UF6 at 56.7 kg (125 pounds) is set to increase at a faster rate if production triples as stated by Iran. That means that by the end of 2012 Iran can be expected to possess a 250 kg (550 pounds) stock of 20 % enriched UF6[5]. Given current production rates[6], Iran would have been able to produce a total of 7000-8000 kg (15400-17600 pounds) of low enriched UF6 by end 2012. The stocks of enriched uranium, by the end of 2012, would be sufficient to produce 125-150 kg (275-330 pounds) high enriched uranium metal, if further enriched and converted.

Third, Iran's engagement in a wide range of related activities including: increasing uranium stockpiles, enlarging its enrichment capacity, and building more nuclear

facilities, demonstrate the comprehensive scope of its nuclear program. Iran's military related efforts such as studies on: special neutron sources not known to have civilian applications, high explosives with precise timing, and missile re-entry vehicle design; alongside procurement, design and manufacturing of nuclear related equipment by military entities; add a dangerous dimension. Fourth, concerns over the scope and nature of Iran's nuclear program are compounded by the fact that the jury is still out on whether all of Iran's nuclear activities are accounted for and are peaceful. The possibility of secret nuclear facilities existing in parallel, present a deeply troubling scenario.

Concerns over possible military dimensions to Iran's nuclear program continue to persist with emerging and remaining unresolved questions in this area. In spite of economical, technological and political difficulties faced, it appears that Iran is determined to, at the very least, achieve a "virtual nuclear weapon state" capability, or in other words be in a position to build a nuclear device, if it so decides. Based on present output capacity at Natanz and barring stops or slowdowns, Iran is able to generate sufficient amounts of fissile material at minimum for a nuclear device, sometime in 2012. Iran is also separately moving ahead, albeit with delay, on its heavy water reactor program that will enable production of weapons' grade plutonium sufficient for one nuclear device annually from 2014 onwards.

Syria is another case that challenges the non-proliferation regime. Syria's nuclear dossier was brought before the IAEA in 2007 when a facility in Dair Alzour, suspected to house a clandestine nuclear reactor, was destroyed by aerial bombing. The site infrastructure; characteristics of the building captured by satellite imagery before and after its destruction; procurement information; evidence of man-made uranium particles obtained from samples taken from the site during the IAEA's sole inspection visit to Dair Alzour granted by Syria under restricted parameters in June 2008; all pointed in the direction that the destroyed facility had a reactor design similar to that of a 5 MWe nuclear reactor built by the DPRK in Yongbyon.

Today, we are faced with a greater challenge to shed light on the Syrian reactor. Syrian authorities have literally covered up evidence in the immediate aftermath of the bombing by pouring concrete over the site and erecting a new building in its place. Apart from the one mentioned visit, Syria has refused to allow inspectors back to the Dair Alzour site.

So what can we make of the nuclear programs of Iran and Syria today?

We see Iran moving in the direction of becoming a nuclear weapons' capable state. As Iran continues to stockpile 20% enriched uranium and increase its enrichment capabilities, we have conversely come to know less about the scope and content of Iran's nuclear program. It has been several years since Iran has stopped implemented the Additional Protocol. Nor does Iran provide early information about the construction of new facilities which it is required under its current safeguards subsidiary arrangements. Iran continues to refuse to address questions on the military dimensions of its nuclear program. Iran has developed an ambitious nuclear program that is diffused in the nature of its distribution of sites and coordinated in its approach to achieve the capacity to field a nuclear arsenal. Its actions bear witness to a regime that intends to stay on this path.

Questions also remain concerning Syria's nuclear program. Was the destroyed reactor built at the Dair Alzour site the only clandestine nuclear facility in the country? Are the uranium particles found in Damascus and at Dair Alzour a sign of more substantial activities yet to be uncovered? Does Syria possess ready fuel for the reactor either in stock or in production? What was the nature and extent of the nuclear ties between Syria and the DPRK, and between Syria and Pakistan? Were there other players involved? The Dair Alzour reactor does not exist any longer, but the IAEA has to ensure that all nuclear material in Syria is declared and is in peaceful activities and therefore requires full cooperation and access from Syria.

When we look at the nuclear paths taken by both Iran and Syria, we need to address the serious challenges these countries pose in setting a bad precedent for potential future proliferators. Their actions continue to challenge international institutions. Their unwillingness to international requests to 'come clean' with their nuclear programs and threat to nuclear proliferation, have increased the stakes of the peaceful pursuit of nuclear energy. Instead of supporting the rights of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes that both Iran and Syria claims to defend, their actions have conversely complicated nuclear energy pursuit. Their actions reinforce the need to underscore the price to pay for rule-breakers as opposed to those that abide by their non-proliferation commitments.

Both the Iranian and Syrian nuclear dossiers have been referred to the United Nations Security Council. Iran is faced with increasing rounds of sanctions that

emphasize the cost of disregarding international resolutions. At the same time, both countries are given the opportunity to clear outstanding questions, walk a different route on their nuclear programs, and walk back the punitive measures imposed. Their refusal to do so must be accompanied by further international resolve on consequences for such actions. The international community needs to understand that its role in emphasizing the costliness of Iran and Syria's intransigence is also instrumental in shaping decision outcomes taken by these two countries. Nations should also play their part to uphold robust non-proliferation standards. In this regard, subsequent UN Security Council resolutions would benefit from provisions that would oblige member states to provide information relating to proliferation activities and nuclear programs of the two countries. It is important that the Security Council reinforces the IAEA's request for full and unimpeded access to all relevant information including claimed military sites or personnel.

When it comes to technical assessments made on pronouncing on the verdict of nuclear programs, it has to be done in an extensive and comprehensive manner that provides the best assurances required under safeguards. That standard cannot be compromised nor should it be blindsided by adjusting timetables to suit last minute promises of cooperation that are not backed up by serious follow-throughs. In the case of Syria, the IAEA should have used all inspection rights it has, including the special inspection. The special inspection option should still be pursued, or the UN Security Council could also choose to provide wider authorities to the IAEA.

The objective is ultimately to prevent the diversion of nuclear energy to nuclear weapons. Iran and Syria must be encouraged to turn a different path on their nuclear programs. This includes employing a range of tools that offer incentives and disincentives, persuasion and dissuasion. Both tracks need to be pursued as a realistic way forward. Iran and Syria must understand that they bear responsibility for the choices they make, and the consequences generated.

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[1] Iran has stated that its actual enrichment output is slightly below 20 % U-235, i.e. 19.75 U-235.

[2] Mr. Abbasi Davani said also that the Fordow facility will use more advanced centrifuges without specifying its type. Iran has tested more advanced centrifuges at a pilot plant in Natanz.

[3] Until the announcement of Mr. Abbasi Davani, Iran has said that the Fordow facility will enrich uranium up to 5 % U-235.

[4] To produce weapons grade uranium (90 % U-235), achieving 20 % U-235 level will in practice already accomplish 90 % of the overall enrichment work required.

[5] The pilot plant at Natanz has over the past few months produced 20 % enriched UF6 at 3.9 kg (8.6 pounds) per month.

[6] The enrichment plant at Natanz has over the past few months produced 3.5 % enriched UF6 at 156 kg (340 pounds) per month, when operating at a capacity of 5820 out of the full 8000 centrifuges installed.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much, sir.

Dr. Satloff?

STATEMENT OF MR. ROBERT SATLOFF, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, WASHINGTON INSTITUTE FOR NEAR EAST POLICY

Mr. SATLOFF. Madam Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member, thank you very much for the opportunity to appear before you today. I salute you for your leadership in addressing issues of vital concern to American national interests in the Middle East, two of which are no greater than the ones on our agenda today.

It is appropriate that the committee addresses Iran and Syria together because these states together as the principal poles of the region's anti-West, anti-American, anti-peace axis have an organic linkage between them.

Madam Chairman, on the technical and scientific matters on today's agenda, I will defer to my colleagues, who are far better qualified than I. I will focus for a few moments on the broader strategic and policy matters at hand.

Madam Chairman, there were two great competitions that define the Middle East today: One, the challenge from Shiite Islamist supremacist ideology, led by the Islamic Republic of Iran; and, second, the challenge of Sunni Islamist supremacist ideology, led by al-Qaeda.

Thankfully, al-Qaeda is on the decline for many reasons. Iran, however, still retains enormous hegemonic designs; still sees American policy in the region at risk; still sees American power waning; still has its sights on expanding its influence throughout the region; and, perhaps most dangerously, is still investing in the pursuit of nuclear weapons.

I believe we must first recognize that the tumultuous events of the last several months have had the effect of limiting our collective attention spans to address the problem of Iran. There simply has been so much to attract our attention in Arab countries that there have not been enough hours in the day for our senior officials to focus on the continuing urgent challenge of Iran.

Secondly, the Iranians, however, have viewed regional change as moving very much in their direction. Even before the Arab Spring, Iran counted as successes the emergence of a Hezbollah-dominated government in Lebanon, the ongoing control of Gaza by Hamas, the crushing of their own internal dissent in June 2009, and our expected withdrawals from Iraq and Afghanistan. And the last 6 months, they have seen American allies disappear in Egypt and Yemen and in Tunisia. They have seen violent tensions emerge between America and its two preeminent regional allies: Saudi Arabia and Israel. Only with the emergence of a challenge in Syria has the democratic wave begun to pose a threat to Iranian interests.

Third, I believe that the direct threat posed by Iran, especially the nuclear aspect of this threat, is more acute today than before the Arab Spring. It only stands to reason, for example, that Iran looks at the situation in Libya and, through its eyes, sees what happens to a country that reaches a nuclear bargain with the West. It eventually gets bombed by the same countries with whom it reached the bargain. I am not criticizing our efforts in Libya. I am looking at this through Iranian eyes.

The logical conclusion from the rulers in Teheran is to speed up their acquisition of a nuclear bomb. That is certainly what I would do. That is certainly what I think most strategists would do looking at their regional situation.

Against this backdrop, I believe it is essential for America to counter Iranian ambitions with some strategic setbacks. There are three places where we can focus on doing this: One, Syria; two, Iraq; and, three, Iran itself.

On Syria, I concur totally with the observations of the ranking member. This is one area, the first time in the Arab Spring, where our values and our interests are complementary. We should not withhold any effort in my view to hasten the demise of the Assad regime. And in my testimony, Madam Chairman, I list, I believe, more than a dozen very specific policy actions the administration could take short of using military force to do precisely that. This is not a moment for hesitance, reluctance, or caution. This is a moment to recognize the strategic opportunity to sever the alliance and to weaken Iran precisely at a moment when Iranian ambitions are at a height.

On Iraq, just one sentence. The opportunity here is to create a new security relationship, which denies Iran the ability to fish in troubled waters in its neighboring country.

On Iran itself, we should focus in two areas, Madam Chairman: First, making more real and believable the U.S. commitment to use all means necessary to prevent Iran from achieving a military nuclear capability.

I believe there is considerable doubt in the minds of Iranians, which is what matters most, whether, in fact, we are committed to that objective; and, secondly, expanding our support for Iranian Democrats and readying the day when the green movement resurrects itself so that we should be ready to do next time what we did not do in June 2009, to be ready verbally and with effective action to support the potential for real change in that country.

I will leave the rest of my comments for my formal remarks and look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Satloff follows:]

Testimony prepared for delivery to the
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"Iran and Syria: Next Steps"

By Dr. Robert Satloff
Executive Director, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy

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Madame Chairman,

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before this Committee to discuss U.S. policy toward two critical states in the Middle East – Iran and Syria. It is appropriate that the Committee address U.S. policy toward these states together because – as the principal poles of the region's anti-West, anti-American, anti-peace axis – there is an organic linkage between them.

The Urgency and Opportunity of Change in Syria

Four months ago, I had the privilege of testifying to this Committee when the hope and optimism of the potential for democratic change in the region was at its height. Now that we have seen what reactionary forces in the region can do in an effort to snuff out the will of the people, using the most repressive and inhuman tactics, I come before you today with the region in a more sober and somber mood. However, it is important to note that we are still witnessing the early days of the vast tectonic shift that is underway in the Middle East. While we need to be vigilant about who we embrace in the march of change sweeping the region and be appropriately cautious to prevent new authoritarians from reaping the benefit from the fall of the old authoritarians, we should not be so frightened of the possibility of change that we fail to see the enormous opportunities that change could bring.

No where is this more the case than with Syria. While the U.S. military is engaged in an important *humanitarian* mission in Libya, the Middle East's real *strategic* drama is being played out in Syria. At stake is not just whether millions of Syrians will finally find freedom and liberty after four decades of dictatorial rule by the Assad family – though that is surely a critical component of the Syrian story. And at stake is more than the survival of a regime that has been a consistent source of tension, threat, and challenge to

U.S. interests on numerous fronts for nearly all of the Assad family's decades of control – though that too is a key aspect of U.S. concern for the fate of the country. Rather, at stake is the opportunity to strike a painful, perhaps decisive blow to the axis of anti-peace, anti-Western, anti-American regimes that is headquartered in Tehran, runs through Damascus, then on to Beirut and Gaza, and has aspirations to extend its reach to Baghdad, the Gulf and beyond.

Syria is the weak link in this axis. Ethnically, religiously and ideologically, its secular Alawite Baathist leadership is the outlier in an otherwise Shiite-led, radical Islamist coalition. Despite the odd pairing of Baathist Syria and Islamist Iran, the Damascus-Tehran connection has proven to be the most resilient and enduring political alliance in the modern Middle East. Breaking that alliance, and thereby severing a critical link in the Tehran-to-Beirut-to-Gaza chain that is vying with America and its friends and allies for regional influence and domination, would be a strategic achievement of immense proportion.

Given this strategic objective, Syria stands out as a case in which U.S. interests and U.S. values complement, not collide, with each other. In contrast with Egypt, for example, where America's commitment to democratic change may have been tempered by regret at the demise of a long-time partner in the Middle East peace process and a helpful player in the regional fight against terrorism, there should be no cause for regret or hesitance in pursuing change in Syria. U.S. interests vis-à-vis Syria are clear – America will benefit from the demise of the Assad regime. No successor regime will be as committed as the Assad regime has shown itself to be to implementing a broad range of destabilizing and dangerous policies, from pursuing a clandestine and illegal nuclear weapons program, to arming and supporting radical Islamist militias in Lebanon and in the Palestinian arena, to facilitating attacks on U.S. troops via foreign fighters in Iraq. And while the United States should work with its friends and allies to do everything possible to ensure the emergence of a successor regime that is pluralistic, representative, democratic and mindful of minority rights, the emergence of a new regime that falls short of that objective – a distinct possibility, I regret to note -- will still constitute a substantial blow to our strategic adversaries in the region and will therefore serve U.S. interests. Indeed, the argument that Assad represents "the devil we know" has lost purchase -- not only among many American strategists but among European, Arab, Israeli and Turkish leaders and strategists as well. (Indeed, the mood shift in Turkey against the Assad regime is especially significant and should be viewed as even more important in the Syria context than was the Arab League's endorsement of international action against Libya.) Now is the moment to capitalize on this strategic convergence, take steps that hasten the demise of the Assad regime and invest wisely in the potential for the emergence of successor leaders in Syria who share our interests in regional peace and security.

President Obama has been laudably supportive of the Syrian people's thirst for change and the Administration has taken some important steps to hasten that process. Sanctions that specifically target Bashar al-Assad and his close circle of political, military and

economic cronies have been powerful both substantively and symbolically. Condemnation by the Human Rights Council has had an important emotive impact in tightening the noose of legitimacy around Assad's neck. And sanctioning Iranian governmental entities that have played a role in the repression inside Syria has been especially helpful, because it shines a spotlight on the true nature of the Iranian-Syrian alliance, i.e., a friendship based on Iran teaching Syria the lessons from its own violent and brutal crackdown on democracy protests in 2009, from how to control the flow of information to how most efficiently to round up opposition leaders and torture them. All these measures to further the isolation of Assad's regime have been useful and positive.

At the same time, however, U.S. efforts to hasten change in Syria have appeared to many in the region to be tentative, hesitant and overly cautious. Compared to the lightning speed with which us policy toward the Mubarak regime evolved -- from "stable" ally to "the transition must begin now" to "now means now" all in less than two weeks -- the pace of U.S. policy toward Syria has appeared to be in slow motion. The argument that U.S. efforts cannot outpace the leverage Washington wields -- and in an adversarial state like Syria we certainly wield far less influence than in an allied state like Egypt -- is serious and deserves scrutiny. But in the final analysis, the U.S. will suffer grater damage to its regional interests if it permits a chasm to open between its public posture on Syria and the tide of popular opinion inside Syria and across the region that America professes to support. In other words, "leading from behind" on an issue of such strategic importance as Syria is not leading at all.

In this, I reject the arguments of some observers of the Syrian political scene that the Syrian people are split on their attitude toward the Assad regime, that a sizable percentage – perhaps even a majority – are still "on the fence," and that it would be hasty to conclude that "the Syrian people" actually want change. To the contrary, I believe that the Syrian people have displayed at least as much disgust with their leaders as did the people of Egypt and Tunisia, as evidenced by the large numbers of Syrians who have joined protests in numerous cities throughout the country, with the only exceptions being central Damascus and Aleppo, and have shown remarkable courage in braving merciless repression in the form of arbitrary arrests, heinous torture, and mass killings – a situation faced neither by the protestors in Egypt or in Tunisia. In other words, I believe we can state with certainty and clear conscience that the Syrian people have spoken with as much clarity and determination as is humanly possible in one of the world's most controlled and repressive states; it is time for the United States to speak – and act -- with similar clarity and determination.

Despite the fact that Syria is a long-time adversarial state over which U.S. influence is much more limited than it is with our authoritarian allies, America's ability to affect the situation, via unilateral and multilateral means, is not inconsequential, especially given

the political isolation and economic weakness of the Assad regime. Specifically, I believe Washington should consider action on the following fronts[1]:

-- **raise the level of our bilateral consultations with key regional players** -- Turkey, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Israel -- on their assessment of the Syrian situation and their individual, joint and collective contributions to assist the Syrian people.

-- **create an international contact group on Syria** that underscores the intense concern and interest among important regional players for the fate of the Syrian people. The purpose is both political (to highlight the deepening isolation of the Assad regime) and operational (to organize refugee support, supply of humanitarian goods to besieged areas, etc).

-- **consider the establishment of "humanitarian relief zones"** in specified areas along Syria's borders with its neighbors. In addition to providing a supply of goods and relief to refugees and, perhaps, to embattled communities inside the country, such zones would underscore the idea that the international community recognizes that change in Syria began on the periphery and is inexorably moving toward the center of the country, as evidenced by the rising tide of protest in virtually every major urban area, including the key cities of Homs, Hama and the suburbs and environs of even Damascus and Aleppo.

-- **raise the level of U.S. dialogue with the transitional leadership of the Syrian opposition and find ways to provide the opposition with funds, training, materiel and support** so they can begin to play a more effective role. Assist them in working with regional players and the Syria Contact Group. Help them take the lead in delivering goods and services to refugees and to operate within the proposed "relief zones."

-- **engage more deliberately and comprehensively with Syrian expatriate communities**, which provide potential sources of information about the situation in Syria and platforms for communicating with Syrians inside the country.

-- **tighten the economic noose on by targeting Syrian energy**. Syrian oil production has been in steady decline since the mid-1990s and is now around 390,000 barrels per day. Of that, Syria exports around 148,000 bpd, with revenues accruing directly to the state. According to various U.S. estimates, oil sales account for about a third of state revenue. Accordingly, the Obama administration should prod the chief buyers of Syrian oil --

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[1] For many of these suggestions, I draw on the fine work of my Washington Institute colleagues David Schenker and Andrew Tabler, "In Seach of Leverage with Syria," *PolicyWatch* No. 1815, June 14, 2011, as well as the collected wisdom of other members of the Institute's senior research staff.

Germany, Italy, France, and Holland -- to stop purchasing the regime's heavy crude. It should also pressure multinational energy companies operating in Syria -- Royal Dutch Shell, Total, Croatia's INA Nafta, India's Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), Canada's Tanganyika, SUNCOR, and Petro-Canada, and China's National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) and Sinochem -- to leave the country. In addition, it should ask Britain to halt the operations of Gulfsands Petroleum, the one-time Houston-based company specializing in extracting heavy oil from depleted fields. The firm relocated to Britain in 2008 to avoid U.S. sanctions on Rami Makhlouf, Asad's cousin and the regime's primary businessman.

-- **expand the targeted sanctions on businessmen who prop up the regime**. Elite defections could play a key role in pressuring the regime to either cut a deal with the country's Sunni majority or leave power. To date, the most effective U.S. sanction levied against Syria has been the Rami Makhlouf designation. Along those lines, Washington should impose costs on other Syrian businesspeople who continue to back the regime.

-- **pursue additional unilateral sanctions**. Washington should add to its robust and growing set of measures against the regime by considering a U.S. investment ban based on the Syria Accountability Act. The EU is also investigating tougher trade restrictions, though multilateral sanctions via the UN are unlikely at this point. To further ratchet up pressure, Washington should urge Syria's leading trade partner, Turkey, to adopt trade sanctions (excluding food and medicine, as the United States does). It should also press Gulf states -- particularly Qatar, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia -- to curtail their business investments in Syria, which have been a lifeline for the cash-strapped Assad regime in recent years.

-- **seek UN appointment of a Special Human Rights Rapporteur on Syria**: Washington should press the UN Human Rights Council to designate a special rapporteur on Syria. To date, the Assad regime has failed to cooperate with the council. The mere discussion of a rapporteur would serve as a point of annoyance for Damascus and keep human rights issues in the spotlight. Given the heinous atrocities underway, it would be difficult (or at least both embarrassing and clarifying) for China and Russia to prevent this step.

-- **ratchet up pressure on weapons of mass destruction issues**. Washington should further tighten the isolation of Syria by pressing for referral of Syria's massive NPT violations (e.g., its undisclosed nuclear program) for action by the UN Security Council. In addition, the United States should organize international consultations to discuss the fate of Syria's chemical and biological weapons stockpile in the event of deepening uncertainty about the fate of the regime. Even some of Syria's political sympathizers, such as Russia and China, have an interest in ensuring the safety of Syria's WMD stockpile to ensure it does not fall into even more nefarious hands than the ones in control of it now.

-- use the bully pulpit to agitate for change: Beyond this litany of measures, I believe the time has come for the President himself to adopt a clearer position on the urgency of political change in Syria. Last month, the President's formulation was that Assad needs either to reform or "get out of the way." There is now ample evidence that there will be no real reform coming from Damascus – only sham reform (if you will excuse the pun: "Sham" is an Arabic term for "Damascus.")

I recognize the logic that drives the Administration's reluctance to state publicly that Assad has lost the legitimacy to govern and should therefore step aside. Such a statement will certainly invite questions about what the Administration is doing to bring about that objective, including questions about whether (and when) the Administration will deploy force to bring about change, as has been the case with Libya.

However, the reluctance to face tough questions and the fear of appearing inconsistent should not prevent the Administration from doing the right and smart thing. To the contrary, the lengthy list of non-military actions cited above underscores the fact that there is a lot for the United States to do to hasten the demise of the Assad regime without the resort to military force. Somewhere, sometime, the Administration is going to have to say that it cannot fight wars everywhere people are themselves fighting for democracy, but that fact should not itself constrain us from siding with those people and offering them all the non-military help and support that we can summon. This is another reason why Syria should be viewed as an opportunity, not a confounding problem – it provides an outlet for the President to place our support for democratic change within a well-defined strategic framework and to explain the contributions we will make to support change in Syria in that strategic context. So far, that strategic context is sorely missing from the Administration's explication of policy toward change in the Middle East.

From Syria to Iran

As noted above, hastening the demise of the Assad regime both celebrates American values and advances American interests. In terms of the latter, it is important to recognize that Syria is a critical front in one of the two great competitions that define the Middle East today – the challenge from Shiite Islamist supremacist ideology, led by the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the challenge of Sunni Islamist supremacist ideology, led by al-Qaeda. Thankfully, al-Qaeda is on the decline, due to a combination of its own vacuous ideology, its operational overreach, U.S. and allied countermeasures, and the ideological alternative millions of Arabs and Muslims have decided to embrace – democratic change. While it remains a potent force, still capable of wreaking havoc in the American homeland and around the world, its potency as an alternative pole of influence and ideological attraction is dissipating. Iran, however, still retains hegemonic designs, still sees American power in the region waning, and still has its sights on expanding its influence in the Arab East, the Gulf, the Levant, and elsewhere.

As outlined above, winning the Syria battleground in the great regional confrontation with Iran would be a major strategic achievement. But Syria is not the only arena in which the United States should "up its game" in countering Iranian ambitions. A more comprehensive approach is needed.

First, it is important to recognize that the tumultuous events of the last several months have had the effect of limiting our attention span for Iran and dulling our collective anxieties about the Iranian threat. There has simply been so much to attract our attention in Arab countries – Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, Bahrain, Syria, etc. – that there has not been enough hours in the day for senior officials to devote what is necessary to Iran. To the Administration's credit, it has undertaken some noteworthy efforts to remind the national security community about the enduring strategic threat posed by Iran; see, for example, the major address on Iran delivered by National Security Advisor Tom Donilon to The Washington Institute's annual Soref Symposium last month.[2] Regrettably, Mr. Donilon's important message was drowned out by events abroad and the President's own distracting speech on Arab-Israeli peacemaking soon thereafter.

Second, as we have naturally focused our attention elsewhere, the Iranians viewed regional change generally moving in their direction. Even before the "Arab spring," Iran counted as successes expectations for U.S. withdrawals from Iraq and Afghanistan, the emergence of a Hizbollah-dominated government in Lebanon; the ongoing control of Gaza by the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas); and the crushing of their own internal dissent following the emergence of the Green Movement in June 2009. Over just the past six months, Iranian leaders reveled in the demise of U.S. allies in Egypt and Tunisia, the departure of the pro-American ruler of Yemen, violent clashes in Bahrain, and the deep tensions that have emerged between Washington and its two most significant strategic pillars in the region, Saudi Arabia and Israel. Only with the emergence of a serious challenge to the Assad regime has the democratic wave begun to pose a threat to Iranian interests.

Third, there is reason to believe that the direct threat posed by Iran – especially the nuclear aspect of the threat – is more acute today than before the "Arab spring." IAEA reports highlight the continuing progress of Iran's nuclear program, problematic military-related experimentation that Iran has undertaken and the ongoing stockpiling of fissile material. Moreover, on a political level, it only stands to reason that Iran looks at the Libya situation and, through its eyes, sees what happens to a country that reaches a nuclear bargain with the West – it eventually gets bombed by the same countries with whom it did the deal. The logical conclusion for the rulers in Tehran is to speed up their

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[2] The full text of Mr. Donilon's address can be found here: http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/html/pdf/DonilonRemarks20110512.pdf

nuclear program. In this regard, it would be foolish to assume that external delay efforts, such as the reported Stuxnet virus, have had strategic repercussions for Iran's nuclear program.

Fourth, it bears repeating that Iran's acquisition or development of a military nuclear capability would dramatically transform the strategic balance in the region, with implications that are severely damaging – even disastrous – for U.S. interests. It would empower the most radical tendencies in the region; provide a defensive umbrella for the region's most dangerous states, militias, entities and terrorist groups; undermine the appeal of the democratic option now gaining traction throughout the region; embolden fifth columnists in critical countries; spur a proliferation race (both among U.S. adversaries and – no less problematic – among U.S. friends, like Saudi Arabia, who may view U.S. failure to stop Iran's nuclear program as a watershed moment which exposes the abdication of U.S. regional leadership) that could make the region exponentially more threatening to U.S. interests and allies; and provide a cover for Iran to act more aggressively to realize its strategic objective of expelling America from the region and anchoring itself as the preeminent regional power. On top of all this, one cannot rule out the possibility that – in certain circumstances – the apocalyptic trend in Shiite theology may win the day and Iran's rulers may actually contemplate the use of nuclear weapons (or even the threat of use) against the United States, Israel, or local allies of the Greater or Lesser Satan. Therefore, it should be apparent that the United States has no more urgent priority in the region than preventing Iran's acquisition or development of a military nuclear capability.

Fifth, despite this threat, there is reason to fear a certain international ennui about the Iranian threat, the sense that many governments have gotten so used to the idea that Iran will eventually get a nuclear bomb that they are unwilling to act against it and will not be surprised when it happens. Indeed, a startling article on an Iranian Revolutionary Guards website, revealing on many levels, recently speculated that when – not *if,* but *when* – Iran explodes a nuclear device, it will suffer no repercussions because the world has sufficiently accommodated itself to the idea of Iran having the bomb. Changing Iran's calculus on this aspect of the issue is essential.

Against this backdrop, a sound U.S. strategy will recognize that it is essential to counter Iranian ambitions with some strategic setbacks. The three places where the United States can most effectively strike a blow against Iran are Syria, Iraq and Iran itself. On Syria, this testimony has already discussed at length the strategic context and what Washington can do. And on Iraq, a detailed discussion of which is beyond the scope of this testimony, the key is to deny Iran the opportunity to extend its influence in Iraq by cementing a new security relationship with the Iraqi government.

On Iran itself, U.S. efforts should focus in two areas – first, making more real and believable U.S. commitment to using all means necessary to prevent Iran from achieving a military nuclear capability and second, expanding support to Iranian democrats and

anti-regime elements who stand the best change of triggering the fundamental change of the Iranian regime that will solve the Iranian strategic challenge once and for all.

On the first point, the most important contribution the United States can make is to restore the credibility of the military option vis-à-vis Iran's nuclear program. Without confidence in the commitment and efficacy of the military option – confidence that is shared by our adversaries and allies alike – there is ultimately little likelihood that other measures will succeed in achieving a peaceful resolution of this crisis. Restoring credibility requires more actions than words, signals than speeches. It is done through deployments, maneuvers, prepositioning, and visible partnerships with key players in the region. With changes coming in both the civilian and military leadership of the Pentagon, now is an especially propitious moment to implement such measures.

As for support to Iranian democrats, the Administration has indicated its interest in expanding outreach to the Iranian people and, in the language of the day, "breaking the regime's communications monopoly." This is important and deserves support. Recent steps taken by the Administration to provide access to software than enables Iranians to circumvent state censorship is welcome, if long overdue. A bureaucratic change that allows Iranians to receive multi-entry visas to the United States is helpful to Iranian students. The resumption of cultural and artistic connections, after a lengthy suspension, is a positive step. But these are all modest measures, when there is so much more to be done – on such issues as hammering home in international fora outrage over Iran's reprehensible and systematic violations of human rights; on improving, expanding and deepening our international broadcasting to Iran; on countering Iranian interference with satellite transmissions into the country; and on establishing broad networks of distance learning for Iranian students who thirst for the humanistic and cultural educational offerings now denied in Iranian universities.

Most importantly, the United States – at the highest political level – should be prepared for the day when Iranians join Egyptians, Tunisians and Syrians in rising up against their rulers. Today's testimony focuses on "next steps" – that is, what should be done now. But it is still not too early for the Administration to prepare for the day when the Arab Spring morphs into the Persian Spring. When that day comes, and when the strategic opportunity to trigger real change is at hand, Washington needs to be ready with words of support and meaningful and effective actions to back them up.

Thank you again, Madame Chairman, for the opportunity to present my views to the Committee.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much. Excellent testimony, gentlemen.

Ambassador Bolton, under what conditions would you support nuclear cooperation agreements or 123 agreements with countries in the broader Middle East? And what criteria do you believe the U.S. must require to ensure that these agreements do not undermine our national security interests and specifically our efforts to counter Iran's and Syria's nuclear weapons ambitions?

Ambassador BOLTON. Well, I would favor 123 agreements under very limited circumstances, where the countries involved foreswear any uranium enrichment or reprocessing activities.

If you look back, President Bush gave a speech in 2003 or 2004 at the National Defense University where he outlined some of these circumstances where we could engage in that kind of activity. I think they need full export control regimes, protections against transshipments. They need to be completely free of any support for regimes that are engaged in state-sponsored terrorism.

All of these criteria, I think, and others contained in the legislation you and Congressman Berman have introduced to reform the Atomic Energy Act, which I think is an excellent way of declaring our intention that if we are going to see the spread of peaceful nuclear power, we want it done under circumstances that are not going to be conducive to proliferation. It is a very, very important point.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you.

And given the realignment of rogues, Iran, Syria, North Korea, what actions do you believe are necessary to cut the links between and end the collusion among Iran, Syria, and North Korea?

Ambassador BOLTON. Well, you know, this is a point that the State Department has struggled with in formulating our response to these nuclear programs because they have done it in silos, North Korea is an Asian problem, Iran is a Middle Eastern Bureau program when, in fact, we know that cooperation among the rogue states has been very extensive. That is one of the reasons President Bush used the phrase "axis of evil."

On ballistic missiles, we know that since 1998, at least, North Korea and Iran have conducted joint research and joint testing. They both have the same Soviet-era Scud missile technology. And they are not doing it because of their interest in weather satellites. They are creating launch vehicles to deliver nuclear payloads.

I think it will become clear ultimately that this North Korean nuclear reactor, a clone of the Yongbyon reactor being built at al-Kabir in Syria, was a joint venture with Iranian involvement. Iran and North Korea share the common interest of hiding their illicit nuclear activities from prying eyes internationally. What better place to hide it than in a country that nobody is looking, as the United States was not looking? We were informed of that by Israeli intelligence in the spring of 2007.

So I think acknowledging these linkages and the risk of other linkages developing. Looking at Venezuela's extensive supplies of uranium in the ground, the risk is that this cooperation could grow.

I think we need to use the proliferation security initiative even more than we do now to stop trade among the rogue states and nuclear, chemical, biological weapons technologies. I think we have

simply got to apply more pressure on China, in particular not to facilitate trade between North Korea and the others. And I think we have got to make it clear that we are determined, in particular, to stop Iran from getting nuclear weapons because the record will be that North Korea continued and expanded its program, despite U.S. opposition, that Iran, over heavy U.S. opposition, succeeded in getting nuclear weapons. And that will be a signal to every other country around the world that aspires to nuclear weapons, that if you have the patience and the will, you can get them.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. And, lastly, in the 1 minute I have left, as we know, there are flights from Teheran to Caracas. Do you believe that it would be possible for the United States to sanction that airline company, that carrier that is involved in those flights? And do you think that there are other opportunities for us to sanction targeted sanctions against Venezuela for their collusion with Iran?

Ambassador BOLTON. Absolutely. I think, as my colleague Roger Noriega at AEI has pointed out, this level of collusion between Venezuela, Hugo Chavez, and the Iranian regime is enormous.

You know, Iran has probably its largest Embassy in the world in Caracas for purposes of evading international financial and other sanctions. And I worry very much about the developments of Venezuela and policy purchasing nuclear reactors from Russia and the possible introduction of a nuclear weapons concern in this hemisphere for the first time in many years.

So I think there is a lot of work we should all be doing on that Venezuela-Iran connection.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Amen. Thank you very much.

Mr. Berman is recognized.

Mr. BERMAN. Well, thank you much, Madam Chair. And I thank the witnesses for their excellent testimony. Just to initiate, I would like to praise and agree with Ambassador Bolton's shout-out for the current head of the IAEA.

There are some very good people at that agency who have been there for a long time who care about proliferation. Now they have a leader who lets them do their work and make subjective and public announcements about what is happening. And I think it was very useful for you to say that, and I appreciate it.

I think, Dr. Satloff, in your testimony, you said it is time for President Obama to say that Assad lost legitimacy in Syria and must go.

But let me see if the witnesses, quickly because I have another question, can take the opposite argument. Someone is saying to the President, "Be careful. There is credibility here. You said that about Ghadafi."

The fact is the President could say that and Assad could remain in power. What is the implication of that? How do you answer the strategist who says, "Here is the problem with doing that?"

Mr. SATLOFF. Thank you, Mr. Berman.

You are absolutely right. There are those people who will say at the first press conference after the President's statement, "So what are you doing to make sure he is gone tomorrow? When is the Sixth Fleet going off the coast of Syria? When are we dropping

bombs on Damascus?" since we cannot use military force to achieve our objectives in every scenario.

The administration needs to face these questions sooner, rather than later, and not let all our policy around the world be hamstrung by the inability to answer the question. We have to be able to say that "Yes, we have objectives. We have strategies to achieve them." And not every objective requires military force to achieve its ultimate goal. We should bite the bullet on this now and be on the right side of what is something which is clearly in our national interest.

For the first time ever, we have a convergence between Turks, Arabs, Israelis, Europeans, and our own national interest on the future of Syria. They have all come to the conclusion that Assad is no longer a legitimate leader. We should build on this convergence and face down that obvious question and not let the bogeyman of that question, "When are you going to be forced to achieve it?," stand in the way of doing everything else, the 20–30 other items on the menu, in order to achieve that goal.

Ambassador BOLTON. Could I just say, Mr. Berman, we should have been doing this a long time ago, but there is one key difference in the case of Syria compared to the other Arab regimes, like Libya. And that is the presence of Iran's not only interest in preventing Assad from falling but its active cooperation in stopping that from happening.

People in the Iranian Embassy are working there. We have reports of Iranian——

Mr. BERMAN. Absolutely.

Ambassador BOLTON [continuing]. Revolutionary guards and so on. So this is one reason I think you have to look at the regime in Teheran and overthrowing that as well as Assad.

Mr. BERMAN. Well, interesting answer. And I could take the whole 5 minutes for doing that. So let me try and get one out, one other question.

Mr. Heinonen, Ambassador Bolton states that it would take—essentially Iran would be able, citing the very respectable institution—I forget the full name of it, Mr. Milhollin, the Wisconsin Project. It would take 1½ months to enrich uranium to weapons-grade uranium. I had the impression it would take somewhat longer, 6 months to 1 year, after kicking out IAEA inspectors, reworking pipes, other tasks. In other words, we have more notice than he thinks.

What is your reaction to what Ambassador Bolton said?

Mr. HEINONEN. Well, it depends, first of all, about how you define this capability and what Iran might have on top of that.

Mr. BERMAN. Let's assume for a second—and I sure hope we don't operate on that rosy a scenario—that this is what they got.

Mr. HEINONEN. Well, it will take quite some time because they have to feed this uranium through a reconfiguration of the cascades, either in Natanz or in Qom now that they are building more. That is a limited number, IR–1 centrifuge the best in the world. So, therefore, I would say, as you said, something between 6 months to 1 year. And they had to turn it also to uranium metal machine, et cetera.

So there is time, but the time is running out, as I said in my testimony, by the end of next year.

Ambassador BOLTON. The estimate of 1½ months obviously was calculated on the basis of what is publicly available information to the Wisconsin Center. The Nonproliferation Education Center estimated 2 months, so slightly longer than that. But I think it is important to understand that the technology is perfectly within the control of the Iranians, that it is simply a matter of the most efficient way of redesigning the pipes and feeding the Iranian end.

When you get to reactor-grade levels of concentration of the U–235 isotope, you have done two-thirds of the work you need to do to get the weapons-grade. Even though the differences look large in terms of percentage of U–235 isotopes, the actual amount of work is really quite small.

Now, there are other steps, as my testimony says, including the fabricating of the metal and whatnot, but the Iranians, as we know, have continued work on a wide range of other aspects of this. And this, again, I want to say is only what we know. And you know the old adage. The absence of evidence is not evidence of absence.

Mr. BERMAN. I am done.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. That is an old adage?

Michael McCaul, vice chair, Western Hemisphere?

Mr. MCCAUL. Thank you, Madam Chair.

I agree with you that time is running out. It has been running out for a while. Madam Chair, you mentioned A. Q. Khan and his network proliferating to Iran, Syria, and North Korea.

Secretary Clinton testified on Iran recently. I gave her that, in my judgment, diplomacy with Iran as a solution to this problem is a naive foreign policy. I believe that they are very close absent a cyber attack on their centrifuges, very close to getting nuclear weapons.

We can't afford a nuclear race in the Middle East. And that is precisely what I believe a nuclear Iran would present. And at the same time, we have the Arab Spring phenomenon, which, on one hand, brings a great promise of democracy and, yet, on the other hand, great threats. Middle East abhors a vacuum. And I believe that Iran wants to fill it.

Ambassador Bolton, can you comment on what we can do at this late juncture to stop a nuclear Iran? And, secondly, assuming they get it, what impact would that have on this Arab Spring phenomenon in the region?

Ambassador BOLTON. Well, I think we are very late in the game. I think, in fact, it is too late to do much of anything, even from cyber attacks. If you look at the production figures for low enriched uranium from the latest IAEA report last month, it is up dramatically from 2009. It is up substantially from the report earlier this year. They are going to introduce more sophisticated centrifuges. They are now obviously aware of the possibility of cyber attack. And I don't doubt they have instituted countermeasures.

I think that this proceeding toward nuclear capability is something that is going to proceed, even with the Arab Spring or maybe even accelerated by it. And it is one of the reasons that even the prospect of democratic change in Iran concerns me.

If you imagine Iran, let's say, in the next year achieving nuclear weapon status but then imagining the regime falling and seeing the creation of a representative government there, I am not sure that representative government in Iran would convince Saudi Arabia not to get nuclear weapons if the new government in Iran kept theirs.

So that this risk of proliferation triggered by an Iranian success in achieving nuclear weapons is an enormous, enormous redline to cross. And we should not underestimate it. It is not simply a question of one country getting nuclear weapons. It is a risk of half a dozen nuclear weapon states in the Middle East in very short order thereafter.

Mr. MCCAUL. And I agree. And I also want to echo and associate myself with the remarks of Madam Chair on the Caracas-Teheran connection. That greatly concerns me. I have had lawmakers from Latin America tell me uranium is being shipped from Latin America to Iran. And that is of great concern.

Let me switch to another topic that a lot of people haven't focused on. That is Azerbaijan. I met with Dr. George Friedman from Stratford yesterday. Obviously they are an ally. They are pro-Israel. They have been an ally in our wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. They are next to, close to Iran. And, yet, according to Dr. Friedman, they are sort of being shunned by the State Department in their ability to purchase military weapons.

It seems to me that they are very strategically placed in the Middle East. And he believes this is one of the key sort of cornerstones in the Middle East that we are not paying enough attention to and needs to be stressed I think more.

Ambassador Bolton, do you have any thoughts on that?

Ambassador BOLTON. I think our policy with respect to Azerbaijan does need to be modified. Obviously this is complicated by the conflict with Armenia and the range of disagreements with their internal policy there. But precisely for the reason that you mentioned, given Azerbaijan's access to Black Sea oil and natural gas assets, the importance of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline route, and just its geographical location, I think this is a place where one of these frozen conflicts, as they say, between Azerbaijan and Armenia needs more U.S. attention. I mean, I know there are a lot of things going on in the world, but this is in the space of the former Soviet Union, one of enormous strategic significance?

I don't think we can forget what Prime Minister Putin said a few years ago when he was still President of Russia, that the collapse of the Soviet Union was the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the twentieth century. I think most of us think it was a great way to end the twentieth century. That is obviously not Putin's view. And his effort, as we have seen by the Russian attack on Georgia, is, at a minimum, to reestablish Russian hegemony in the space of the former Soviet Union. It is very much in our interest to prevent that.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much, Mr. McCaul.

Mr. MCCAUL. Thank you.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Sires of New Jersey is recognized.

Mr. SIRES. Thank you, Madam Chair.

You know, China has long been a roadblock to tougher international sanctions on Iran. Iran continues to use China's companies to procure hardware for its nuclear and missile programs. In the past, it seems that both administrations have been willing to confront China on trade issues, but they seem to be reluctant to confront China on this issue. How do we balance our interests with China and then we confront China on this issue where they keep assisting Iran and keep blocking any strong sanctions against Iran?

Ambassador BOLTON. Well, I can tell you my personal view that I don't think we have been strong enough with China in insisting that they conform to international norms and agreements and indeed sanctions against nuclear and other forms of proliferation.

Many of the companies that we are concerned about in China are owned by the People's Liberation Army. And it is very difficult for the civilians to influence them.

I think China's record has gotten better, but I think there is little question that China has been lax on dealing with the sanctions against North Korea, that its interest in securing natural resources, like oil and natural gas from countries like Iran, has led it to fly political cover for Iran, in the Security Council. And I think it is something—and I would say this was a mistake in the Bush administration and a mistake in the current administration. We have to make nonproliferation compliance and determination to stop it a higher priority and not sweep it behind other priorities, which is what tends to happen to them.

Mr. SIRES. Thank you.

Dr. Heinonen, would you like to add to that? No. I am concerned about Venezuela. And I am concerned because many people come to my office, including a recent Panamanian friend of mine tells me how Chavez is stirring up the peasants in that country, in the countryside. But I am also concerned about the airline, Conviasa.

People tell me that crates and crates of things from these airplanes come through into Venezuela and out of Venezuela. And I was also told that the largest Embassy in terms of personnel is in Caracas now from Iran. Can you comment on that?

Ambassador BOLTON. Yes. You are correct. I have heard exactly the same thing about the size of the Iranian Embassy in Caracas. And it is not because of their longstanding cultural ties. It is because the Iranians are using the Venezuelan banking system and ports and other facilities in Venezuela to evade sanctions.

I think it has been a measure of substantial concern whether cutout companies, front companies, are being used to evade other sanctions, including the military sanctions, that have been imposed on Iran over the years and that Chavez is actively cooperating and assisting Iran in evading these sanctions.

Mr. SIRES. There are two or three flights weekly.

Ambassador BOLTON. Yes. I think those are the ones that we know about as scheduled, but I would worry that there are many more into airports and Venezuela that we are not monitoring or observing.

Mr. SIRES. Dr. Satloff?

Mr. SATLOFF. Just one further word on this. In addition to the direct Iranian-Venezuelan problem, I would call your attention to Hezbollah activity in Venezuela. And using Venezuela as a base

throughout Latin America, there is considerable clandestine activity by Hezbollah, both fund-raising and operations. And I know that law enforcement in the United States is quite concerned about their ability to use this as a base for potential operations throughout the hemisphere, including here in the homeland.

Mr. SIRES. Well, this is where my conversations with one of the Panamanians, the concerns that they have that Chavez through surrogates is stirring up the interior of——

Ambassador BOLTON. Yes. There are many concerns that we have had about what Chavez is doing with the revenues from his oil production in terms of destabilizing democratic governments in Latin America, providing assistance to the FARC guerrillas in Colombia, and other things like that as well. So when you look at the range of destabilizing activities he is undertaking, even before you get to the nuclear question, it is something that I think we just need to take a lot more seriously than we do.

Mr. SIRES. I didn't mean to take away from Syria and Iran, but I just think it is important to have the ties that are being established here, Madam Chair. Thank you.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you, very important. Thank you, Mr. Sires.

And now I am pleased to recognize for 5 minutes Ms. Jean Schmidt of Ohio. And I would ask her to chair the committee for a few minutes. I have to return a few phone calls.

And Ms. Schmidt and I are colleagues on a bipartisan congressional softball game, on a lighter note, than this heavy and important topic. It is a free game. You are all invited, Watkins Field, at 7 o'clock p.m. today. Debbie Wasserman-Schultz and Jo Ann Emerson are our colleagues who are captains of the team. So come support us. And it is for breast cancer research.

Ms. Schmidt of Ohio is recognized and am pleased to have her take over.

Ms. SCHMIDT [presiding]. What the Chairlady didn't tell you is we are playing the press corps. So pray for us.

On a more serious note, Ambassador Bolton, given what you know about Syrian nuclear programs, do you agree that we cannot bifurcate our policies toward Syria, Iran, North Korea, and their enablers?

Ambassador BOLTON. I think this is a very important point. I think looking at the threat of nuclear proliferation from a global perspective is important because we know what the historical linkages have been.

We know the prospect of cooperation. And that should tell us that there is a lot going on that we don't fully understand. So that in the case of Iran, where there have been IAEA inspectors on the ground and some public disclosure, there is next to nothing out of North Korea. And in both cases, our intelligence is weak.

So the prospect of cooperation on uranium enrichment, on ballistic missile testing and technology, on a whole range of activities designed to evade international sanctions, this kind of cooperation requires a comprehensive effort and not saying, "Well, North Korea is a case we deal with over here. And Iran we deal with over there. And Venezuela we deal with somewhere else."

Ms. SCHMIDT. Mr. Heinonen, do you want to add to that?

Mr. HEINONEN. I think Ambassador Bolton has raised an important issue here when he earlier made a reference to the silos. I will repeat it. I have a very simple question. Who has the global overview on nonproliferation? Who has a global overview on these activities?

For example, IAEA is very limited because IAEA verification is basically based on comprehensive safeguards agreements. And this kind of thing doesn't exist between IAEA and North Korea. IAEA has instruments come from there, from Security Council.

So we need to have somewhere a system which looks the whole thing in its totality and what is the connection with Venezuela and someone? North Korea delivered nuclear material to Libya at the same time Pakistan was providing technology to Libya. Pakistan was providing all. Technology went from Pakistan to North Korea and to Iran.

So we have a very complex situation. I think that we need to get some kind of, I would say, global order to this. And then what is entirely almost out of this global picture are the missile programs, because there is no organization currently which is looking at it. However, these are interconnected. So we need to create perhaps a new system to tackle with this.

Thank you.

Ms. SCHMIDT. Thank you.

Ambassador Bolton, along the same thing, would you agree that a holistic approach is necessary to ensure that these proliferators, to quote your 2003 testimony, understand that they will pay a steep price for their effort?

Ambassador BOLTON. Yes. I think the other would-be proliferators around the world are watching how we deal, in particular, with Iran but also North Korea. And to the extent that they perceive that launching into a nuclear weapons program brings the United States or others to the table with inducements, economic or otherwise, to get them to stop the program is itself an incentive to get into the nuclear weapons business.

And the ability of regimes like North Korea and Iran to evade sanctions, certainly not to feel the full pain of sanctions shows that the cooperation among these rogue states is something that we have not dealt with effectively.

So while you can't find anybody in Washington who doesn't agree that proliferation is a problem, the blunt reality is for 10 years, 20 years we have talked about it a lot, but we have not been effective. North Korea has tested nuclear weapons. Iran is getting very close. Others could be on the way.

And what that means is the number of nuclear weapon states, admittedly with relatively small nuclear arsenals, is increasing. Dr. Heinonen mentioned Pakistan, a very grave concern should that government fall into the hands of radicals or terrorists, that its substantial arsenal of nuclear weapons would be available for terrorism on a worldwide basis.

So, even though we don't face the kind of civilizational threat that we faced during the Cold War from a potential exchange of nuclear salvos with the Soviet Union, the use of nuclear weapons as terrorist devices has to worry us. They are targeted against in-

nocent civilians. That is the purpose that these states want the weapons. And we shouldn't underestimate the danger that we face.

Ms. SCHMIDT. I am going to let you finish it, Mr. Satloff. You wanted to say something.

Mr. SATLOFF. Madam Chairman, I would like to focus the attention for a moment on the potential for loose WMD in Syria. Syria has, as we know, not just a nuclear issue but chemical weapons program, biological weapons program. The country is in disarray. Leadership may crack. We don't really know what is going on inside the leadership of Syria.

I would urge the United States to take a leadership position in organizing a contact group of interested countries to focus on what do we do with the potential for loose WMD in Syria to ensure that loose WMD does not get into the hands of terrorists. And this country borders the Mediterranean. This country borders our allies, our NATO ally, including Turkey; our friend Israel.

I think this is a matter of huge importance. And I am not sure that adequate attention is being paid to this issue.

Ms. SCHMIDT. Thank you.

And now I am going to turn the questions over to Congressman Higgins from New York.

Mr. HIGGINS. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Dr. Satloff, you had indicated in your opening statement that the United States response to the 2009 Green Revolution perhaps should have been more direct and decisive. Would you elaborate a little bit further?

Mr. SATLOFF. Thank you, Congressman.

Yes. I would say, in retrospect, almost everyone in the administration would say that we missed an opportunity. We missed an opportunity to use our bully pulpit to more effectively support the aspirations of the Iranian people. We missed an opportunity to ensure that Iranians had the technical means to circumvent the Iranian Government's use of communications technology to break down social networks and to stop the flow of information among the opposition.

We didn't use our technical means to prevent Iranian interference with satellite activity. There are all sorts of things that we chose not to do.

I would hope that we are better prepared when I believe the Iranian people are going to rise up again.

Mr. HIGGINS. We read recently that there are deep fissures within the Iranian leadership between Ayatollah Khamenei, the supreme leader, and that of President Ahmadinejad.

Some have argued that a stronger response—and this has been going on for some time, including the revolutionary guard. It is a generational divide in many respects. But some have argued that a stronger American response in 2009 would have helped to coalesce those forces back together because we are viewed as a larger enemy than the enemy than the enemy within. You reject that I presume?

Mr. SATLOFF. I think it is apples and oranges, Congressman. I think that the division between the supreme leader and the President is a structural phenomenon of how the Islamic republic is created.

It has one leader, the supreme leader, who is appointed by God, as it were, and the other who gets elected by mere people. And the one who gets elected by mere people has two terms. They expire at the end of 8 years, as he is now approaching the end of his second term, as is the case with the previous two Presidents, Khatami and Rasanjani.

The differences emerge between the God-appointed and the human-appointed leader. This is just part of the system. It has nothing to do with the United States, I am afraid to say.

Mr. HIGGINS. Ambassador Bolton, you had talked about Iran's nuclear weapons program. And you expressed concerns not only about what is publicly known, but what is not publicly known should really concern us.

Iran and North Korea, economic sanctions don't appear to be working. A nuclear Iran cannot be contained or deterred. Are you advocating for a U.S. military action to destroy Iran's nuclear capabilities?

Ambassador BOLTON. Yes. I have argued for that for about 3½ years. I think that the only real alternative now is that Iran gets nuclear weapons. And I advocate that course, not happily, not because I am enthusiastic about it but because I think the alternative of a nuclear Iran is so much more dangerous for us and for our friends and allies in the region, that having seen all of the other options for dealing with the Iranian nuclear weapons program failed, that is what we are left with.

Mr. HIGGINS. If such action was taken, what would be the regional consequences relative to the Middle East?

Ambassador BOLTON. Well, I think there are two basic questions. First, how would Iran itself respond? And, then, second, what would some of the other countries do? I think the fact is the Arab regimes in the region would welcome the destruction of Iran's nuclear weapons program.

They fear it as much as we do or Israel does, but they appreciate that they don't have the capability to do anything about it. They would certainly criticize us or criticize Israel if Israel were to undertake such a strike. They would criticize us publicly, but they would welcome it privately.

The issue of how Iran would respond is obviously a crucial element of the calculus. And it is one we can't know with certainty. But I have looked at this very carefully. And I think that Iran is unlikely to do anything that would bring it into direct confrontation with the United States beyond the destruction of the nuclear program itself.

I think Iran's most likely response would be to unleash Hezbollah, in particular, and possibly Hamas as well for rocket attacks against Israel. I think that would certainly be their response if it were Israel that did the attack. And that obviously puts at risk civilian populations.

This is not a pleasant alternative, but it is a lot less pleasant to look at a future where Iran has nuclear weapons.

Mr. HIGGINS. Thank you. And I will yield back.

Ms. SCHMIDT. Thank you. And now we will recognize Mr. Duncan from South Carolina for 5 minutes for questions.

Mr. DUNCAN. Thank you. And, Ambassador Bolton, thank you for being here today. I followed your career with a lot of interest and admiration over the years, and I want to say thank you for your service to our country.

First and foremost, I would like to delve into the connection between Iran and al-Qaeda a little bit more because, really, the links go back to the early 1990s with the Quds force and al-Qaeda, go back to the Khobar Towers bombing in Saudi Arabia and a lot of links there. The 9/11 Commission report detailed a lot of those connections.

And concurrently with support from a state sponsor like Iran, al-Qaeda would be in a better position than ever to strike both the West and our allies and from that chaos in both the Arab world and south Asia.

What should the United States be aware of with that relationship? And what threat do you see from al-Qaeda with regards to Iran?

Ambassador BOLTON. Well, certainly Iran has for many years been the world's central banker for international terrorism. And it is a funder and an armor of terrorists pretty much on an equal opportunity basis: Hezbollah; Shia; Hamas, which Iran has funded and armed; Sunni. The Iranian regime has funded extremists in Iraq who have attacked American forces, but they have also funded their once-sworn enemy, the Taliban, in attacking NATO forces in Afghanistan.

So I don't think we really know what the connection is, but I think just as a target of opportunity, it is obviously something to worry about because the common enemy is the United States.

Even if there is no connection at all, obviously the risk of al-Qaeda itself getting nuclear weapons I think is something we have to consider. It has been an objective of al-Qaeda almost since its inception. And to me it is the continuing perfect storm that terrorists of whatever stripe do get weapons of mass destruction and use them against the United States or our friends and you have 9/11 on a dramatically more damaging scale.

Mr. DUNCAN. On a different line of questioning because I am very interested in the Muslim Brotherhood and the Arab Spring and what is going on with the rising democracy or move for a democratic self-governance within the Arabian Peninsula, northern Africa, it is my opinion and I am asking if you agree with me that the Muslim Brotherhood is pushing for a more democratic style government so they will have a seat at the table. And they can continue to grow their influence toward other things.

Ambassador BOLTON. Well, I think that is certainly their objective. I think it is very hard to project what comes out of the changes that we have seen in different parts of the Arab world. You know, in Egypt today, we still have a military government. And that military government has brought Hamas and the Palestinian Authority together.

It has opened the border between Egypt and Gaza Strip and allowed Hamas to have full communications with the Muslim Brotherhood, which is, in effect, its corporate sponsor. This government in Egypt has recognized the regime in Iran for the first time since

1979. Leading figures in the regime as well as candidates for President have called into question the Camp David Accords.

So I think we are in a very dangerous period ahead. And I don't think that we can project on a straight line what organizations like the Muslim Brotherhood or others did from the past into the future because with the repression of the Mubarak era released, that they could move in any of several different directions.

They could become legitimately democratic or they could become far more radical from a religious point of view. And that is why I think with conditions so uncertain we have to really be very worried about the future of the Camp David Accords under any new Egyptian Government and what effect that would have in Jordan and to the security of Israel and our other friends in the region more broadly.

And when you lay over all of that uncertainty, the continuing, indeed growing risk of Iran's nuclear weapons program, I think that conditions are right for more turmoil, more risk, more potential trouble in the region than at any time in decades.

Mr. DUNCAN. Thank you, sir. And I yield back.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much.

Mr. Payne, the ranking member on the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, and Human Rights, is recognized.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much. I wonder what our assessment of the IAEA is currently, whether it is really strong enough. I do remember that during the Bush administration, we did watch inspections, which Saddam Hussein prevented IAEA to have the opportunity to inspect properly.

However, I do recall that when Hans Blix was finally given the opportunity by Saddam Hussein, although albeit late knowing that they had no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, although all of our experts, Cheney and Rumsfeld and Bush and yourself, were convinced that there were weapons of mass destruction.

And, of course, we ordered the IAEA to leave Iraq at the time that the Saddam Hussein regime said they could go anywhere they wanted to know because they, of course, knew they had no weapons of mass destruction nor did they have biological or chemical weapons. However, we ordered the IAEA out and then, of course, went on to have the attack on Iraq. And then we did finally conclude that there were no weapons of mass destruction. And, of course, we got rid of a bad guy. It cost us an awful lot.

I wonder if anybody could tell me about your opinion of IAEA at this time and its effectiveness. Evidently it's not what we would like it to be because this Ambassador Bolton said that the way to deal with Iran, of course, is to blow up their facilities. I wonder if that is a permanent solution or whether they may have an alternate site where they are developing the weapon at some other site that we may not have determined and that to destroy one may not end the problem.

So I just wondered if anybody had any comments. Of course, Ambassador Bolton certainly could comment on anything that I have mentioned and that I have said since I referred to him and his administration. We have had these discussions before.

Ambassador BOLTON. Right. Well, Congressman, I would love to get back into a discussion of Iraq. I will just say one thing on that

score. One reason we believe Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction because after the first Persian Gulf War, he declared to the United Nations that he had massive supplies of chemical weapons, which he never proved to the U.N.'s satisfaction that he had destroyed. And, actually, I am not aware of anybody before the second Persian Gulf war who didn't believe that Saddam had massive amounts of chemical weapons. That turns out not to be true, for whatever reason, but I don't remember before the war anybody doubting that his claims of those stocks were accurate.

On the IAEA itself, I think, as Congressman Berman noted,—and I appreciate his mentioning it—I think under the leadership of the new director general, Yukiya Amano, that there is a real chance that the IAEA can have the more prominent role in antiproliferation activities that we hope that it should.

The IAEA has always been a different kind of U.N. specialized agency. It has a unique relationship with the Security Council. And it is one we should foster.

I think it has been historically the case that the IAEA's inspectors, like Dr. Heinonen and others, have been straight shooters. They have tried to report the facts as they have been able to find them out. Our trouble has been more at the top level. I think that problem is now corrected. I certainly hope so. And I certainly look forward to supporting the IAEA in its efforts, particularly on Iran.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much. My time has just about expired, but we do recall that we did know that Iran, Iraq had biological and chemical weapons because we supplied them. They never had the capacity to make them themselves according to the report that I have seen. And I just wonder whether that is true or not that they had——

Ambassador BOLTON. It's not true. Now, we did not supply Iraq with biological or chemical weapons. Their programs were known before. The question was before the attack what level of stockpiles that the Iraqis had.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you.

Ambassador BOLTON. And their declarations on the chemical weapons side, in particular, were very extensive. U.N. weapons inspectors asked repeatedly to see the stockpiles and to see them destroyed. And the Iraqi regime repeatedly said, "We have destroyed the"——

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much.

Ambassador BOLTON. [continuing]. "But we are not going to let you see where."

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you.

Mr. Chabot, the Middle East Subcommittee chair, is recognized.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mr. Satloff, if I could begin with you first? I was in the region recently. One of the countries we were in, among others, was Saudi Arabia. I am interested in relative to Saudi Arabia and Iran. The Saudis believe quite strongly in fear that Iran is slowly but certainly encircling them and that there are Iranian influenced entities, terrorist organizations, and otherwise; in Egypt, for example, the warming relations between Egypt and Iran, Yemen, Bahrain, others, and that that is one of their real threats. Are they correct in that belief that they have?

Mr. SATLOFF. I think that the Saudis are absolutely correct to take with the utmost seriousness the Iranian effort to encircle them and to erode first American strength in the Gulf and eventually to compel Saudi Arabia to recognize Iranian hegemony in the Gulf.

The Saudis view what is going on in Yemen as an opportunity for Iran to be trouble-making via the Houthis. The Saudis view what happened in Bahrain as an Iranian exercise. I think to a certain extent the Saudis exaggerate the Bahrain situation. The Bahrain situation was legitimately overwhelmingly a domestic opposition movement for more pluralistic society, but the Iranian effort to take advantage of this is real. And, most importantly, I think the Saudis doubt America's staying power, but America is not evincing toward the Iranians the view that we are truly committed to stop your nuclear program, that we are truly committed to roll back your intentions to expand your influence, that we are truly committed in Lebanon, truly committed in Syria, truly committed in Iraq. I think the Saudis' view is that we are without a clear strategy to counter Iran's hegemonic designs.

And, therefore, you see this fundamental tension between Washington and Riyadh today. It is not over some symbolic issue. It is over a very real difference.

Mr. CHABOT. I tend to agree with you. And, despite some of the administration have kind of poo-pooed Saudi's belief in that, I think there is a lot of legitimacy in that belief and the threat that Iran plays toward Iran and the rest of the region.

We have such limited time. Mr. Ambassador, if I could turn to you next? You said a couple of things that really struck me, and maybe you could expound upon them a little bit. One, you said that our security guarantees our declining. And I assume what you mean is that other countries, perhaps some that are relying upon the United States or what ultimately if they ally themselves with us or they cooperate with us, in some countries' mind, that may be not necessarily the smartest thing to do in their view. Could you talk about that a little bit?

Ambassador BOLTON. Right. The idea that some have advocated is that for the Gulf Cooperation Council nations; for example, the six Arab members of that organization, that if we gave them guarantees that we would protect them against Iran's use of nuclear weapons, that that would help create a system of deterrence in the region that would mitigate against the risk of Iran once it gets nuclear weapons.

I think that is, number one, a pretty minimal kind of guarantee. I mean, are we saying we are prepared ourselves to engage in hostilities with Iran if they use nuclear weapons or threaten them against the Gulf countries, number one? And, number two, I think for the Gulf countries themselves, they are not inclined at this point to believe the security guarantee when they see essentially a withdrawal of America from Iraq; substantial drawdown in Afghanistan; and, as Dr. Satloff mentioned, an inability over a sustained period of time to deal with the Iranian terrorist of nuclear weapons threats to begin with?

Mr. CHABOT. Let me shift to one other gear, if I could. I have only got real limited time. You had also said that absent some I

think you said significant step or some action or something from an outsider, Iran will get nuclear weapons. I tend to agree with that. I think that the sanctions and all of this stuff is just a way to kick it down the road and that they are bound and determined and they are going to do it unless there is some action.

And I don't have much time for you to respond, but any quick response you want to give?

Ambassador BOLTON. I agree.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Sorry.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. That's good. Thank you so much.

Mr. Engel, my good friend, the Subcommittee on the Middle East and South—no—the ranking member on the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere? You switched regions on me. And I am still thinking of you in that area. Thank you.

Mr. ENGEL. Well, thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair. And, of course, you and I did good work together passing the Syria Accountability Act many years ago. And we now have joint legislation against Syria again.

Ambassador Bolton, it is good to see you again. I remember the time we visited the United Nations and appreciate your work and Mr. Heinonen and Mr. Satloff as well. Thank you. Thank you very much.

When we sat down and did the Syria Accountability Act back in 2003, I noted that the State Department's list of terrorist countries that support terrorism included Syria. And it was a charter member of that list since 1979, when that list came through. And, yet, it was renewed every year as a charter member. And we continued to have normal diplomatic relations with Syria.

Frankly—and I question some of the administration officials here—I couldn't understand why we sent our Ambassador back to Syria. I didn't think that their behavior was warranted for us to send an ambassador back.

It seems to me, you know, we made a decision to go into Libya. And I supported that decision. But I think Syria is worse than Libya, quite frankly.

Libya is a large country. Ghadafi is out of his mind. And, granted, he is a bad player and the Arab League did say that they wanted to get rid of him. But when you look at what Assad has done, you look at the fact that Lebanon, which had a war with Israel not long ago, and part of the agreement to end that war was that the weapons that Hezbollah had would not be replenished and, yet, Hezbollah has many, many more weapons today than it did before. And obviously those weapons came from Iran through Syria. And Syria is the closest ally with Iran.

So I just don't understand why we are turning our heads the other way when it comes to Syria. And I wonder, Ambassador Bolton, if you could comment on that.

Ambassador BOLTON. Well, I largely agree with that analysis. I was at the U.N. when we negotiated the cease-fire resolution to bring to a conclusion the Summer 2006 war between Israel and Hezbollah. And central parts of that resolution involved pushing Syria further out of Lebanon and demarcating the border, making

sure Syria wasn't supplying weapons to Hezbollah and Iran as well.

And the fact was that we were trying to use the opportunity. At least that is where we started out, not only to buttress the Cedar Revolution in Lebanon but to apply pressure to the Assad regime in Syria as well. And we just simply did not follow through on that. And that has been a mistake. And we can see it in spades now given the violence against innocent civilians that is an Assad family tradition in Syria.

Mr. ENGEL. Let me ask you something else. Back in 2007, during the Bush administration, it was generally felt that Iran was obviously producing weapons, nuclear weapons. And there was talk about the administration taking out Iran's facilities.

And then there became a national intelligence estimate, which said essentially, falsely obviously, that Iran had stopped its nuclear weapons programs in 2003 and, therefore, all the steam seemed to go out of the Bush administration. At least that is the way it appeared to me in terms of confronting Iran.

You know, we would have been better off confronting them earlier. It is harder now. Can you tell me about that and what your feeling is about that because I think that was a disaster?

Ambassador BOLTON. Well, I think that NIE was the most politicized intelligence estimate probably in the history of our intelligence services. It did real damage to the focus on Iran. And it was inaccurate when it was written.

I give an example in my testimony of reports about the Parchin facility in Iran, an artillery and armor base where they were doing testing on simultaneous detonation capabilities. In the Fall of 2004, reported by ABC News, it was live testing going on then, the only purpose of which was to create the capability to explode a nuclear device.

So I think that there were factual mistakes in that estimate. I think it was politicized. I think it has done enormous damage. And I don't think we have operated for quite some time on the basis that it is accurate. And it certainly was not.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you.

Mr. Satloff, let me ask you this. I have been frustrated with Saudi Arabia because obviously they could be more helpful in terms of the Middle East peace process and help bring the Arab countries over. Iran is obviously a major threat to Saudi Arabia. One of the Saudi royals was saying the other day that they thought that Saudi Arabia would try to bring down the price of oil in order to hit Iran in the pocketbook.

Why isn't Saudi Arabia doing more to help us bring the Iranian regime down or at least stop the nuclear weapons program vis-à-vis reaching out to Israel?

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. And that is an excellent question that will be answered at a later time. Thank you.

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Chair.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Rohrabacher, the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations chair.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you very much, Madam Chairman.

On April 8th of this year, Iraqi troops stormed into Camp Ashraf, which is on the Iraq-Iran border, and massacred unarmed Iranian

expatriates who were residents of that camp. This, in and of itself, was criminal activity. I mean, as a crime against humanity or at least a murder of those 35 unarmed people. And I would say the wounding of at least 100 others is a crime.

But does this also, Mr. Bolton, indicate that Iran is having undue influence on Iraq? Here we did all of this we could do to create a democratic Iraq. And then they are under the tutelage of Iran? Because obviously the slaughter of these people, these unarmed people, in Camp Ashraf was done to the benefit of Iran.

Ambassador BOLTON. Well, I think it is very troubling what happened, as you mentioned, what the Government of Iraq did there. I am aware also that they refused to allow U.N. and other members of a congressional delegation to visit Camp Ashraf in the past couple of months.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. That was my delegation. Yes.

Ambassador BOLTON. I just couldn't believe that they did that. And I do think that there are many signs of Iran's efforts to increase its influence inside of Iraq and very troubling and inadequate the responses by the current Government of Iraq.

So that as our forces leave, here is a good example. We gave protection to the refugees at Camp Ashraf. Our military disarmed them, took their pledges of renunciation of terrorism, and believe they cooperated with us in a range of things.

General Hugh Shelton, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, has said publicly the MEK aided us before the invasion of Iraq. So it is a very troubling history.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Yes. And I suggest that we, Madam Chairman, keep an eye on this. We will be holding a hearing with my Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of this committee, into the massacre at Camp Ashraf.

Let me just note that, Mr. Satloff, your remarks were a breath of fresh air. I will just have to say I am tired of being the only one who is suggesting this strategy that you seem to be advocating today. That is an active promotion of democratic movements as a means to achieve ends, foreign policy ends, very similar to the Reagan doctrine, who we were supporting those who were fighting against Soviet tyranny during the Reagan years.

When we were talking about Syria and Iran, let me just underscore the point that you made was so important for us to understand. Yes, we are supporting democracy except when it really, when the crisis, is upon us.

And aren't you disappointed that the United States, your testimony indicates that, we don't seize the moment to fight for what we believe in or at least help those who are fighting for democracy but we sort of step back at a time of crisis in order to let history run its course? Is this the way you identify that, as I do?

Mr. SATLOFF. Well, I appreciate your kind words, Congressman. Thank you very much.

I do see in Syria and Iran enormous strategic opportunities for the United States. These are places where our values and our interests are synonymous. We don't have to make the choice. We don't have to wring our hands, as we did perhaps with Egypt, where we might have regretted the loss of a peace process partner

but cheered the Democrats. Here we will lose an adversary and gain democracy.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. During the Cold War era, again, Reagan did this with the Soviets. We ended the Cold War without having a confrontation with the Soviet Union.

On another subject, let me just say over the years I have depended on the IAEA for information and found it a good source of information, although not necessarily a good source for policy. Why is it that when you take a look at North Korea and Pakistan and Iran, you know, obviously these are—everyone has complained about that, but, again, my colleague mentioned earlier it's China who is behind all of these people.

I mean, if we are so gutless that we cannot bring up the Chinese relationship in this type of proliferation to these countries, we are going to have this proliferation. It is going to continue. And I would hope that we start paying attention to the role that China is playing. North Korea——

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you.

Mr. ROHRABACHER [continuing]. Didn't develop these on its own. Neither did Pakistan. And neither is Iran. China is playing a horrible role.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you, Madam.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I have raised the attack on Camp Ashraf directly with Secretary of State Clinton, with the Iraqi authorities, with the U.N. High Commissioners, Commissioner for Refugees, and Ranking Member Berman and I have worked together and will continue to do so to ensure the safety of the residents of Camp Ashraf. And we thank you for being here with us today.

So pleased to yield time to my Florida colleague, Congressman Deutch of Florida.

Mr. DEUTCH. I thank you, Madam Chair. And thanks to all of you for being here this morning.

Dr. Satloff, current sanctions law allows the State Department alone to determine whether to investigate and whether to sanction companies involved in the energy sector of Iran. Process can often lead and, in fact, does to diplomatic relations, potentially trumping national security concerns, particularly when it comes to these Chinese companies.

It is estimated that more than 100 Chinese companies operate in Iran currently. And, in fact, in February, the President of Iran's petroleum engineering and development company was quoted as saying that "China will invest $2.5 billion in developing the South Azadegan Oil Field that straddles the border with Iraq."

If we are unwilling to sanction these companies, what leverage do we have with the Chinese?

Mr. SATLOFF. Well, first of all, I agree very much with your assessment of the problem, Congressman. What I would urge to complement our efforts on sanctions or beyond the need to actually pursue this is to go to the Chinese with the choice. And this means working with the Saudis to be a larger diplomatic actor in this arena, to go to the Chinese with a choice: Do business with us or do business with Iran. And if the Saudis were willing to make that

choice, to put the choice to the Chinese, then we might actually get a greater Chinese cooperation vis-à-vis Iran.

But because we go back to the earlier problem of Saudi disagreement with the United States or reluctance or disbelief in our commitment vis-à-vis Iran, we don't get full cooperation from the Saudis on what they might be willing to do vis-à-vis China either.

So I think we need to go back to a more serious discussion with the Saudis to get them to engage and compel the Chinese to make a choice: Business with us or business with the Iranians?

Mr. DEUTCH. So is there additional leverage that the United States has? The suggestion of the Saudis putting the choice to them I understand, but is there additional leverage that we have?

Mr. SATLOFF. Sure. Within the larger context of U.S.-Chinese relations, I would like to see this administration raise this level, raise this issue much higher on the ladder of our agenda.

Nonproliferation I would like to think this President views as one of his very top priorities. If that is the case, then there are things that we should be willing to play with in the U.S.-Chinese relationship in order to get China to be far more cooperative on the Iranian issue.

Mr. DEUTCH. Dr. Heinonen, I know you may have touched on some of these I am told, but I just would like to confirm. You spent 20 years with IAEA. An awful lot of that time was spent focused on Iran's nuclear ambitions. Can you give us your assessment from the latest report, particularly Iran's increased production of high enriched uranium, their claim to have faster, higher update and faster centrifuges?

You spoke earlier apparently about breakout. And there seemed to be some slight disagreement between you and Ambassador Bolton on how long that might be.

My question really is not just how long it would take if they choose to break out but how likely it is that we would know.

Mr. HEINONEN. Thank you. First of all, I think that we have a little bit of disagreement with Ambassador Bolton only because whether they use current centrifuges or the ones which we may not know they have. So the number differs.

Mr. DEUTCH. And, again, I understand that, if I may, from I think the perspective of most of us here, whether it is, in fact, 1 year or 1½ months, should they choose to do it, there is no reason to view either of those as less urgent.

Mr. HEINONEN. So the known centrifuges are almost all the time under the control of IAEA. So if they manipulate the sensitive cascades, the international community knows it roughly in 2 weeks time that the IAEA has a program provided that the Secretariat takes the action and informs its Board of Governors.

There are unannounced inspections. There are cameras. There are seals. Once they are compromised, these pictures will report it. So we know subsequent of a situation very fast.

Mr. DEUTCH. But we can know there are additional facilities like Qom, right?

Mr. HEINONEN. Yes. That is where the unknowns are. And that is where probably we have also some differences in those numbers. And that is what has happened now during last I would say 4 or 5 years with Iran, since they suspended the implementation of the

additional protocol, that knowledge of international community about the nuclear program of Iran has come down while their capabilities are ramping up. So these two things go in the wrong direction.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you.

Mr. HEINONEN. That is the dilemma.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you.

Mr. Fortenberry, the vice chair of the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, and Human Rights, is recognized.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Thank you, Madam Chair. Gentlemen, thank you for coming today. I appreciate your testimony.

Ambassador Bolton, given that sanctions seemingly are not slowly significantly the march toward Iran's nuclear ambitions and their capability, we appear to be drifting toward a de facto containment policy should they obtain weapons. Can you unpack what that scenario looks like?

Unfortunately, I read through your statement, but I didn't have the last point. The paper wasn't stapled to it. You said it is significantly different from the containment policies in the Cold War. Can you elucidate on what that scenario would look like?

And then the parallel question is I would like all of you to just project out based upon the current trajectory of the situation what this is going to look like in 5 years.

Ambassador BOLTON. Well, I think the differences between an Iran with a relatively small number of nuclear weapons and the Soviet Union during the Cold War cover a variety of grants. I was just giving one example there. They have got a different view of the value, the relative value, of life in the hereafter versus life here on Earth. That is one thing that——

Mr. FORTENBERRY. So do you think that religious value would beg the potential uses of a nuclear weapon?

Ambassador BOLTON. I think it is a very different calculus than the communist in Moscow in the Cold War who, whatever else you want to say about them, were atheists and thought they were only going around once and weren't all that enthusiastic about throwing it away.

But the real problem is the logic of deterrence itself, which, however successful it may have been as we understand the Cold War better, we can see how risky it was and how nearly on any number of occasions it didn't work. When you have got an asymmetric threat, in particular, a threat that could be aimed not at the United States but at a friend or ally of the United States, that calculus is even harder.

So that the perception that Iran has or is very close to nuclear weapons would give them a leverage in the Middle East that would completely undo the existing framework we have. And I think that is something that should undermine our confidence in our ability to contain and deter a nuclear Iran.

But an even more fundamental point is if I am wrong about that, it doesn't stop with Iran. And when other countries, like Saudi, Egypt, Turkey, and maybe others, have the prospect of getting nuclear weapons, then you are in a multi-polar nuclear Middle East where, you know, in the Cold War, it was a bipolar deterrence at

work. In a multi-polar environment, it is inherently far more dangerous and unstable.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. I basically knew what you were going to say before I asked the question, but I think it is important to paint that scenario.

Dr. Satloff, you had mentioned that you believe the Iranian people will rise again. And it is related to your point earlier, Ambassador Bolton, that the only prospects here from your perspective on stopping this is a military intervention or an imminent regime change.

A lot of us have placed a great deal of hope in anticipation and a lot of encouragement through this committee and in other places in the hands of good Iranian people who are simply seeking a new form of governance that is consistent with their tradition of justice.

How real do you think that is now, though?

Mr. SATLOFF. I think that the prospects are better today than they were a year ago for the very simple reason that Iranians are looking at what is going on elsewhere in the Middle East. The idea that not just friends of the United States, Egyptians, Tunisians arising up but friends of Iran, Syrian people. I think the Syrian model is hugely powerful and will have a major impact on whether the Iranian people themselves choose this path. And that is another reason why this is a strategic opportunity for the United States to help bring about change in Syria, which will help trigger change in Iran.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Short of those two objectives, military intervention of some kind and a regime change through a rising of the people, Mr. Deutch was pointing out the other leverage points that we may have. All of this tends to focus on our efforts. And, yet, we sometimes don't think about these leverage points.

You said, "Let's tell the Chinese: Business with us or business with Iranians?" I think that is great. The problem here is we basically have shifted so much manufacturing overseas to them they make the stuff. Wal-Mart sells the stuff. They have the cash. And they buy our debt.

So this completely dysfunctional relationship that we have with China does not empower us to actually ask them for leverage in helping us against Iran. We are almost supplicants.

Mr. SATLOFF. Actually Congressman, I was referring rather specifically to what we hope the Saudis would do, which is the Iranians are——

Mr. FORTENBERRY. I'm sorry. I didn't——

Mr. SATLOFF [continuing]. In deep search for oil resources.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Yes.

Mr. SATLOFF. If the Saudis would say, "Business with us or them?" that would hurt the Iranians greatly. The Saudis would provide all of the oil resources the Chinese need.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. But clearly there are linkages to China here as well that we could potentially leverage. And I'm sorry. I mixed the point up. Thank you.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much.

Mr. Sherman, the ranking member on the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade, is recognized.

Mr. SHERMAN. I want to comment briefly on Mr. Fortenberry's comments. I mean, an Iran with nuclear weapons is not only terrorism with impunity and this has been pointed out an end to the nonproliferation regime.

I am old enough to have lived through the Cuban missile crisis, where you had a confrontation of two, military confrontation of two, hostile nuclear powers. We have gunboats versus American destroyers in the Persian Gulf from time to time. And I would hate to have one of those be a confrontation between two hostile nuclear powers, in part because we rolled the dice once with the Cuban missile crisis. I don't want to do it again in my lifetime. But also Khrushchev was considerably saner than the Iranian regime.

And then, of course, we dream, as Mr. Satloff does, of an uprising, but it may not come this year. It may come 5 years from now.

Ambassador Bolton, if there really were 2 million people on the streets of Teheran in Shallah and if this regime was going to be swept out of power, would they act like Gorbachev, shrug their shoulders and walk off the world stage, or would they go out with a bang?

Ambassador BOLTON. Well, I think they demonstrated in the aftermath of the fraudulent elections in the summer of 2009, they are prepared to kill the stay in power. And I think that is what is going on in Syria as well. So I think it——

Mr. SHERMAN. Are they prepared to use nuclear weapons against Israel in order to perhaps regain popularity in Iran or are they willing to use nuclear weapons against the United States if they feel that, "Well, they are going out anyway. They might as well go out that way"?

Ambassador BOLTON. You know, I don't honestly know the answer to that question, but, as you suggested, I would rather not find out. That is why I think it is so critical, so critical to stop the regime in Teheran from getting these weapons to begin with.

Mr. SHERMAN. Ambassador, the MEK is still on the terrorist list. Should they be? Why are they still on the terrorist list? You have some understanding of the inside of the State Department. And over the last 15 years, has the MEK done more to help American security or to hurt American national security?

Ambassador BOLTON. It has done more to help American security, particularly on the nuclear weapons front I know of my own personal knowledge. And I can say this. I think the State Department is now under a court order to revisit the terrorist designation.

And I think they should and should do it promptly. I think whether it's a designation of a foreign terrorist organization or a state sponsor of terrorism, the State Department has got to look at the facts and let the facts fall where they may. And political considerations, one way or the other, should not enter into it.

MEK was put on the terrorist list and kept on the terrorist list on several occasions in the hopes of getting friendlier diplomatic response.

Mr. SHERMAN. How is that working out?

Ambassador BOLTON. It has not worked out. So let's look at the facts. Let's let the chips fall where they may. And if they don't deserve to be on the list, let's not let political considerations keep them there.

Mr. SHERMAN. I want to commend you for your comments on the infamous NIE and then ask you about a license that is pending in the Obama administration. And, unfortunately, it is very close to being issued. I believe the ranking member and chairwoman have joined me in trying to stop this. And that is a license to GE to repair the engines on the civilian Iranian aircraft.

If we repair those engines, can we be confident that the planes will not be used to take weapons to Assad or Hezbollah?

Ambassador BOLTON. Certainly not. You know, I opposed those licenses back in 2002 and 2003. I guess they are just persistent people. But I was against granting them then. I am against granting them now.

Mr. SHERMAN. Should we be providing money or weapons to dissident elements in Syria?

Ambassador BOLTON. I think we should be providing whatever assistance they think would be helpful to them. And I would have done this on both an overt and covert basis going back years. And I would say the same with respect to Iran.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Satloff, do you have any comment on that?

Mr. SATLOFF. In my testimony, I suggested the establishment of humanitarian zones on each of Syria's borders that would be a base with which we could work with the Syrian opposition. If what they need are materiel, then let's provide materiel. If what they need are just goods, let's provide the goods. All of their neighbors want to help. We should be there for them.

Mr. SHERMAN. Are you talking humanitarian assistance or the tools to overthrow the Assad regime?

Mr. SATLOFF. If they are looking for the tools, then we should help provide them. I think that what they are looking for most of all, Congressman, are not the weapons but the communications tools.

The best weapon that the Syrian people are using in their fight against the regime is YouTube. And we should provide them the means to circumvent the Syrian Government's efforts to repress information in the country.

Mr. SHERMAN. Thank you.

Finally I want to comment on how important it is that we sanction Chinese companies for their business in Iran because if we don't, not only do they take up the slack in Iran, but our European friends get very angry that the sanctions are not putting pressure on Iran. They're just shifting the business opportunity to Beijing.

Ambassador BOLTON. Could I just say on that——

Mr. SHERMAN. Yes.

Ambassador BOLTON [continuing]. When I was Under Secretary, we sanctioned a lot of Chinese companies. And it provoked howls of outrage from the State Department but also from China. It had a very important effect because it focused Chinese attention on things that were happening that sometimes I think the central government didn't necessarily have control of. I wish we had sanctioned China more.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much.

Mr. Burton, chairman of the Subcommittee on Europe and Eurasia?

Mr. BURTON. Thank you, Madam Chairman—Chairwoman. Excuse me. I always get that wrong.

Mr. Bolton, good seeing you again, Ambassador. I watch you on television quite a bit. You are saying what I think. And I feel like I am helping write your speeches. So I just want you to know I agree with——

Ambassador BOLTON. I take all the help I can get, Congressman. Thank you very much.

Mr. BURTON. First of all, my big concern is the United States energy policies. Right now we still get somewhere around 30–35 percent of our energy from the Middle East. And if Iran continues with their nuclear program—and I read today where Ahmadinejad has said that they are not afraid to make a nuclear weapon.

If they continue to do that with their goal, stated goal, to destroy Israel, what is your view on what might happen? Do you think Israel would take a first strike action against Iran before they had a weapon that could be delivered to Israel? And if so, how would that affect the United States energy policy?

Ambassador BOLTON. Well, it certainly has been Israeli policy up until now not to permit hostile states to get capacities that would put them in the vicinity of nuclear weapons. That is why they bombed the Osirak reactor out of Baghdad in '81. That is why they bombed the North Korean reactor in September of '07. They have allowed Bushehr to go into operation. The Iranians are building a heavy water reactor, heavy water production facility at Arak. And obviously their uranium enrichment program is well underway.

I obviously don't know what the Government of Israel is going to do, but based on their past performance, faced with that kind of existential threat, it wouldn't surprise me.

Mr. BURTON. Well, I guess that is the concern that many of us have in the Congress that if that were to occur, there might be a real widespread conflict over there involving other countries. And that could bottle up maybe the Persian Gulf or the Suez Canal. And we would be right hip deep in there to get the energy we need to survive as a nation.

Syria. I read in my notes here that they are getting chemical weapons from Iran. Is that correct? And if so, how do we deal with that? Because that again is a weapon of mass destruction. I wish my colleague Don was still here because those were weapons that were in Iran, at least we thought, Iraq, we thought when we first went in there.

Ambassador BOLTON. Well, there is no doubt that both Iran and Syria have active chemical weapons programs. Whether they are working together or not at this point I don't know, but that wouldn't surprise me at all. Syria is one of the few countries that has used chemical weapons against its own citizens. And as long as they have that capability, it should be a concern of ours.

Mr. BURTON. Well, it is pretty obvious to me that Iran and Syria have been working together. They have been a conduit for Hezbollah's and Hamas' weapons going through there. And, as I recall, Hamas still has headquarters in Damascus. So they are working hand in glove. So it really concerns me.

I would like to just make one more comment. I have heard a number of you mention that we ought to use the Saudis or have

the Saudis put pressure on Iran. The Saudis are business associates of ours. We buy our oil from there. But they continue to support the establishment of madrassahs, not only in the Middle East but around the world. And those madrassahs are teaching radical Wahhabism. And that is a threat to the entire world.

So if we are putting our confidence in the Saudis to work with us, I think we need to do that with a jaundiced eye because so far they certainly haven't stopped their expansion policy with the madrassahs.

I had one more question here. The ballistic missile program of Iran, they have short-term missiles now. How far along are they with intercontinental ballistic missiles? And how likely is it that they would have the ability to deliver a missile to the United States at any time in the future?

Ambassador BOLTON. Well, they just recently launched their second satellite. The first was in 2009. That is a critical demonstration that they have got ballistic missile capabilities. The real issue for them and for North Korea is whether they can downsize the nuclear device into a warhead-sized package or increase the thrust of their rocket capabilities to put the two together and deliver it over the long distances.

But we know that both countries have been working hard on this for a long time. And reports concerning North Korea, in particular, are very troubling about their Taepodong 2 capabilities, which I think we have got to assume, at least in part, have been shared with Iran.

So they are working from both ends perfecting the nuclear device, downsizing it, and increasing their rocket capabilities.

Mr. BURTON. Let me make just one comment regarding regime change in Syria. I sincerely hope that the administration if they decide to take any military action, that it comes to Congress first.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much, Mr. Burton.

Mr. Connolly of Virginia?

Mr. CONNOLLY. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

A question for all three panelists. What should we understand is going on internally in the Iranian Government right now in terms of the public feud between Ahmadinejad and the so-called supreme leader?

Mr. SATLOFF. Congressman, I think the public feud is a reflection of the fact that President Ahmadinejad's second term is coming to a close. And as it is coming to a close, Khamenei is exerting his authority, reminding people who the true supreme leader is, preparing for the next Presidential election to ensure that throughout the political system in Iran, they know who will be determining who the next President will be. So we are seeing clerics that for the last several years might have been edging toward Ahmadinejad because of his popularity now jumping ship from him knowing that Khamenei is the true source of power in this country.

There isn't a divide on policy vis-à-vis the United States. One of them is not arguing to negotiate the nuclear agreement with the United States because out of a different ideological view, I think this is much more having to do with the distribution of power in the future next election and Khamenei's continuing control over that political system.

Ambassador BOLTON. I agree with that. I would just add one thing. I think in the past few years, there has been a shift of power toward the revolutionary guards in a variety of ways: Economic power. Certainly they control the nuclear weapons program. And I think part of the struggle that is playing out is the role of the revolutionary guards and whether indeed they are moving toward not just the theocracy, which they have now, but a kind of militarized theocracy. And I don't think that is finished. I don't think that power shift is finished yet.

Mr. HEINONEN. And I believe that not very much will change in the nuclear program for a very simple reason, that when Iran started the last program in 1985–87, the President of the country was Khamenei. And the prime minister was Mousavi. So they both are the founding fathers of the current nuclear program.

Mr. CONNOLLY. And would you agree with your two colleagues on the panel that we should read this as jockeying for reassertion of dominance as pretty much an internal political thing in Iran with no significance in terms of shifting of form of government or policy? I am asking you, Mr. Heinonen. Mr. Heinonen?

Mr. HEINONEN. I think that the way I see—I am not the policy person, but the way I see is that one of the few things which unifies Iran today is the nuclear program. It is a patriotic program. And they have seen in the last 8 to 10 years that it has brought the impact to the world states. And, therefore, I believe that they continue on this line, and they will be very unified.

Mr. SATLOFF. I do want to concur with the thrust of Ambassador Bolton's comment, which is that the Iranian regime is becoming more narrowly and narrowly militarized with less and less popular support. Even as it exerts control as it smashes dissent, it relies on a narrower and narrower base of support.

It is still powerful. It is still in control of the country. But this is not the regime that can bring millions of people into the streets to chant "Death to America" as it did 20–30 years ago. The support is much narrower than ever before.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Does that suggest, Mr. Satloff, that there is long-term an instability built into that form of government, that regime, that, sooner or later, may manifest itself?

Mr. SATLOFF. Absolutely. Just as there was a fundamental instability built into the Soviet system, there is fundamental instability built into the Iranian system. Our job is to hasten the decline so we don't have to wait 70 years, as we did with the Soviets.

Mr. CONNOLLY. How do we hasten the decline?

Mr. SATLOFF. Well, here one way is to try to roll back Iranian successes. And I suggested in my testimony how to do that in Syria and Iraq and elsewhere.

Secondly, I think that the projection of American power so that Iranians are convinced that we will use it to prevent their acquisition of a nuclear weapons capability is itself the key ingredient to a peaceful resolution.

Here I have a somewhat disagreement with Ambassador Bolton. I don't think we yet have the test of whether the Iranians have had to make the choice because I don't think the Iranians are yet convinced that there is a significant price to pay for them approaching the line. Once they are convinced, then we will have the test.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Thank you very much. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you. Excellent questions, Mr. Connolly.

And we are so pleased to have had you gentlemen as our witnesses. It really was an enlightening committee hearing. And we thank you for taking the time to be with us.

And, with that, the committee has adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:17 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

Material Submitted for the Hearing Record

FULL COMMITTEE HEARING NOTICE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515-0128

Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), Chairman

June 20, 2011

You are respectfully requested to attend an OPEN hearing of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, to be held in **Room 2172 of the Rayburn House Office Building (and available live, via the WEBCAST link on the Committee website at http://www.hcfa.house.gov):**

DATE:	Thursday, June 23, 2011
TIME:	10:00 a.m.
HEARING:	Iran and Syria: Next Steps
WITNESSES:	The Honorable John Bolton Senior Fellow American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research *(Former U.S. permanent representative to the United Nations and former Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security)* Mr. Olli Heinonen Senior Fellow Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs Harvard University *(Former Deputy Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency and head of its Department of Safeguards)* Mr. Robert Satloff Executive Director Washington Institute for Near East Policy

By Direction of the Chairman

The Committee on Foreign Affairs seeks to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. If you are in need of special accommodations, please call 202/225-5021 at least four business days in advance of the event, whenever practicable. Questions with regard to special accommodations in general (including availability of Committee materials in alternative formats and assistive listening devices) may be directed to the Committee.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

MINUTES OF FULL COMMITTEE HEARING

Day *Thursday* **Date** *June 23, 2011* **Room** *2172 Rayburn*

Starting Time *10:00 am* **Ending Time** *12:17 pm*

Recesses [ ] (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____)

Presiding Member(s)

Chairman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen

Check all of the following that apply:

Open Session [✓]
Executive (closed) Session [ ]
Televised [✓]
Electronically Recorded (taped) [✓]
Stenographic Record [✓]

TITLE OF HEARING:

Iran and Syria: Next Steps

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Attendence Attached

NON-COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

HEARING WITNESSES: Same as meeting notice attached? Yes [✓] **No** [ ]
(If "no", please list below and include title, agency, department, or organization.)

STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD: *(List any statements submitted for the record.)*

Rep. Connolly SFR
Rep. Carnahan's QFR to Mr. Heinonen and Mr. Satloff

TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE _____
or
TIME ADJOURNED *12:17 pm*

Jean Carroll, Director of Committee Operations

Hearing/Briefing Title: Iran and Syria: Next Steps

Date: June 23, 2011

Present	Member
X	Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, FL
X	Christopher Smith, NJ
X	Dan Burton, IN
X	Elton Gallegly, CA
X	Dana Rohrabacher, CA
	Donald Manzullo, IL
	Edward R. Royce, CA
X	Steve Chabot, OH
	Ron Paul, TX
	Mike Pence, IN
	Joe Wilson, SC
	Connie Mack, FL
X	Jeff Fortenberry, NE
X	Michael McCaul, TX
X	Ted Poe, TX
	Gus M. Bilirakis, FL
X	Jean Schmidt, OH
X	Bill Johnson, OH
X	David Rivera, FL
	Mike Kelly, PA
	Tim Griffin, AK
	Tom Marino, PA
X	Jeff Duncan, SC
	Ann Marie Buerkle, NY
	Renee Ellmers, NC

Present	Member
X	Howard L. Berman, CA
	Gary L. Ackerman, NY
	Eni F.H. Faleomavaega, AS
X	Donald M. Payne, NJ
X	Brad Sherman, CA
X	Eliot Engel, NY
	Gregory Meeks, NY
	Russ Carnahan, MO
X	Albio Sires, NJ
X	Gerry Connolly, VA
X	Ted Deutch, FL
X	Dennis Cardoza, CA
X	Ben Chandler, KY
X	Brian Higgins, NY
	Allyson Schwartz, PA
	Chris Murphy, CT
	Frederica Wilson, FL
	Karen Bass, CA
	William Keating, MA
X	David Cicilline, RI

The Honorable Gerald E. Connolly (VA-11)
HCFA Full Committee Hearing—Iran and Syria: Next Steps
Thursday, June 23rd, 10am

The wave of popular unrest across the Middle East ought not to distract observers from other serious security issues that exist in the region. Recent reports regarding Iran and Syria's nuclear activities in particular require close scrutiny.

Earlier this month, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) voted to report Syria to the UN Security Council over the now-defunct Dair Alzour[1] nuclear reactor. Though Israel destroyed the reactor in 2007, the IAEA detailed Syria's transgressions in a comprehensive report finalized last month. The report detailed evidence that Syria was in violation of its international nuclear obligations. Among other things, the nuclear watchdog concluded that "the features of the destroyed building and the site could not have served the purpose claimed by Syria."[2] The report also pointed out the similarities in the dimensions of the Dair Alzour nuclear reactor and the Yongbyon reactor in North Korea.[3] The report did not elaborate on this coincidence, and Syria denies that Dair Alzour housed a nuclear site.

Because of its involvement in the affairs of various actors in the Middle East, Syria's nuclear activities ought to be scrutinized carefully. Syria's support for Hezbollah is well-known; in 2006 the United States froze the assets of Syrian Major General Hisham Ikhtiyar for allegedly contributing to Syria's support of foreign terrorist organizations including Hezbollah. Moreover, Syria was involved in Lebanon's internal politics for years, and was challenged only during the Cedar Revolution following Rafik Hariri's assassination. In fact, observers theorize that elements of the Syrian government and Hezbollah were involved in the Hariri assassination.

Of course Syria is not the only country that evokes concern; Iran has nuclear ambitions and a history of supporting several terrorist groups which directly target Israel. Iran is a major arms supplier for foreign terrorist organizations (FTOs) such as Hamas, which regularly fires rockets into Israel. Iran also uses Hezbollah to exert influence in the region; Iran's increasing influence in Iraq is a growing worry.

The United States and its allies have taken swift action against Iran, targeting members of the Revolutionary Guard through sanctions. As a supporter of that legislation—the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions and Divestment Act of 2010 (CISADA) and a cosponsor of the Chairman's Iran Threat Reduction Act of 2011, I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue to address the Iran threat. We cannot sit idly by while Iran and Syria attempt to skirt the rules to pursue their own agendas in the Middle East at the expense of the peace and security of the rest of the world.

Thank you, Madam Chairman. I look forward to today's hearing.

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[1] Also known as the Al Kibar facility.
[2] IAEA Board of Governors, *Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in the Syrian Arab Republic.* May 24, 2011, p. 3.
[3] Ibid.

QUESTIONS FOR THE PANEL
THE HONORABLE RUSS CARNAHAN (MO-03)
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Hearing on
Iran and Syria: Next Steps
June 23, 2011 at 10:00 A.M.
2172 Rayburn House Office Building

1) **Mr. Heinonen:** The ability of the United States and other countries to institute tough sanctions against the Iranian government was facilitated by UN Security Council Resolution 1929 which, according to Defense Secretary Gates, provided "a legal platform for individual nations to then take additional actions that go well beyond the resolution itself." The June 2010 resolution, which itself instituted sanctions against Iran for its continued failure to live up to its obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, was followed by beefed up sanctions regimes from the United States, European Union, Australia, Canada, Japan, Switzerland, and South Korea.

   In light of the important role UN action has played in efforts to curb Tehran's nuclear ambitions thus far, isn't it true that strong, robust U.S. engagement with the world body is key towards ensuring that Iran lives up to its international commitments on nuclear non-proliferation?

2) **Mr. Heinonen**

   As I mentioned in my statement, it is essential to reinforce further the mandates of the IAEA and the UN Security Council Sanctions Committee. The enhanced regime should not only include reporting of violations of sanctions, but oblige the Member States to share with these bodies all information in their possession on (nuclear) proliferation activities of Iran and Syria. To this end, the leadership of the US Government is indispensable.

QUESTIONS FOR THE PANEL
THE HONORABLE RUSS CARNAHAN (MO-03)
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Hearing on
Iran and Syria: Next Steps
June 23, 2011 at 10:00 A.M.
2172 Rayburn House Office Building

Mr. Satloff: I think the wave of outcries for democratic reform in the Arab world points to the need for a re-evaluation and re-prioritization of our public diplomacy tools. I believe this also holds true in Iran, where we saw massive uprisings following the 2009 election. As people throughout the region struggle to reclaim a voice in their governments, it strikes me that we should be critically thinking not only about our state-to-state diplomacy, but also about the value added of our citizen-to-citizen diplomacy, as a cost-effective tool to broaden and supplement our reach that yield high returns on our investments

In your testimony, you mention the importance of the U.S. seeking ways to engage the Iranian people, such as methods to circumvent state-sponsored internet censorship and educational exchanges. Could you please expand on these options and the barriers to their implementation? What about with respect to the Syrian population?

[NOTE: Responses to these questions were not received prior to printing.]