

# Special Document File

## THE IRAN NUCLEAR NEGOTIATIONS: ISRAEL AND THE U.S. CONGRESS



### *The Framework Agreement*

- A. EU Foreign Policy Chief Federica Mogherini and Iranian FM Mohammad Javad Zarif, "Iran Nuclear Plan," Lausanne, 2 April 2015 . . . . . 70
- B. U.S. Department of State, "Parameters for a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action regarding the Islamic Republic of Iran's Nuclear Program," Washington, 2 April 2015 . . . . . 71

### *Israel and the U.S. Congress*

- C. House Democrats, Letter to Speaker John Boehner to Postpone Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu's Speech to Congress, Washington, 18 February 2015 . . . . . 74
- D. Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu, Remarks before the U.S. Congress regarding the Iran Nuclear Threat, Washington, 3 March 2015 (excerpts) . . . . . 75
- E. "Leaked Mossad Cable on Iran's Nuclear Program," Al Jazeera, 23 February 2015 . . . . . 80
- F. Iranian Amb. to the UN Gholamali Khoshroo, "Netanyahu's Nuclear Deceptions," *The New York Times*, 3 March 2015. . . . . 80
- G. Senate Republicans, "An Open Letter to the Leaders of Iran," Washington, 9 March 2015 . . . . . 82
- H. Iranian FM Mohammad Javad Zarif, Response to Republicans' Open Letter to the Leaders of Iran, New York, 9 March 2015 . . . . . 83
- I. Thomas Friedman's Interview of U.S. Pres. Barack Obama, "Iran and the Obama Doctrine," *The New York Times*, 5 April 2015 (excerpts). . . . . 84
- J. U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, Interview with Israel's Channel 10 News regarding the Iran Nuclear Plan, Washington, 30 April 2015 (excerpts) . . . . . 90

*Just days after his inauguration in August 2013, Iran's newly elected president, Hassan Rouhani, called for a resumption of the stalled negotiations on Iran's nuclear program with the P5+1 (the five permanent members of the UN Security Council—the United States, France, China, Russia, and Britain—plus Germany), which have been held on and off since 2006. The following month, representatives from the P5+1 and Iran met on the sidelines of a UN General Assembly (UNGA) meeting on 25–26 September and on the next day, U.S. Pres. Barack Obama spoke to his Iranian counterpart in a phone call that marked the highest-level communication between the two countries since 1979. After talks resumed, on 24 November the parties established a Joint Plan of Action to govern the negotiations (see Quarterly Update in JPS 171). While they missed July and November 2014 deadlines, they settled on a plan to finalize a framework agreement by the end of March 2015.*

*The first two documents in this file outline the framework agreement reached by the P5+1 and Iran on 2 April 2015, two days after the 31 March deadline. Addressing the issues of enrichment,*

*Journal of Palestine Studies* Vol. XLIV, No. 4 (Summer 2015), p. 68, ISSN: 0377-919X; electronic ISSN: 1533-8614. © 2015 by the Institute for Palestine Studies. All rights reserved. Please direct all requests for permission to photocopy or reproduce article content through the University of California Press's Rights and Permissions website, at <http://www.ucpressjournals.com/reprintInfo.asp>. DOI: 10.1525/jps.2015.44.4.68.

*inspections and transparency, reactors and reprocessing, sanctions, and phasing, the framework agreement lays the foundations for the final Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) governing the deal between the two sides: the relief of sanctions against Iran in exchange for the country's adherence to a restricted, civilian nuclear program.*

*As negotiators made progress on the framework agreement, many U.S. Congress members stepped up efforts to subvert the deal, arguing that it would leave enough infrastructure in place for Iran to produce a nuclear weapon. The vigorous debate this quarter centered on legislation introduced by Sen. Mark Kirk (R-IL) and Sen. Robert Menendez (D-NJ), and by Sen. Bob Corker (R-TN): respectively, the Nuclear Weapon Free Iran Act of 2015 and the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015. Fearing that legislation would kill the deal before the framework agreement was reached, Obama lobbied Democrats for their support and threatened to veto any legislation passed before the end-of-March deadline.*

*The partisan divide grew with the Israeli prime minister's announcement in January that he had accepted an invitation to address a joint session of Congress just two weeks before the 17 March Israeli general election. The invitation to PM Benjamin Netanyahu caused something of a diplomatic incident. As it was issued by the Republican Speaker of the House, John Boehner, without prior consultation with the administration, Obama declined to meet with the Israeli premier when he was in Washington, citing the "long-standing practice and principle" of not meeting with world leaders prior to elections being held in their countries. Congressional Democrats also censured the timing of the speech, and 23 of them sent Boehner a letter calling on him to postpone the Israeli prime minister's appearance before Congress until after the Israeli election.*

*The speech went ahead as scheduled on 3 March, however. Much in the vein of his infamous UNGA speech in 2012, Netanyahu argued that Iran was being deceptive and that its track record clearly proved it posed a threat to the region (see JPS 165). The speech, which also drew parallels between Iran and the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS), garnered mixed reactions. While 58 congressional Democrats skipped it entirely, many Republicans used it to gain momentum on legislation limiting the potential deal. Additionally, a group of 47 congressional Republicans, led by junior senator Tom Cotton (R-AR), sent an open letter to Iranian leaders on 9 March, asserting (incorrectly) that any deal reached with Obama would not be binding and could easily be overturned by Congress after his term ended in 2017.*

*In the rest of the world, commentators and the media pointed to Netanyahu's history of fearmongering around Iran's nuclear program. Weeks before the congressional speech, Al Jazeera released a leaked cable from Israel's Mossad intelligence agency in October 2012 stating that Iran was "not performing the activity necessary to produce weapons"—giving the lie to Netanyahu's UNGA speech less than a month earlier that Iran was "under a year" away from producing a nuclear weapon. On the same day as Netanyahu spoke to the Congress, an op-ed by Iran's UN ambassador, Gholamali Khoshroo, outlined the Israeli premier's past "alarmist rhetoric" about Iran, dating it as far back as his legislative term in the 1992 Knesset.*

*Despite the official conclusion of the framework agreement on 2 April, Republican legislators continued to push for congressional oversight, resulting in vigorous wrangling between the administration and its legislative backers, on the one hand, and its congressional critics, on the other. Eventually, Corker's bill provided the common ground necessary for bipartisan support and it*

*passed the Senate on 7 May (98–1) and the House on 14 May (400–20). As enacted, the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015 requires the Obama administration to hand the JCPOA to Congress for final approval expressed in a joint resolution. If Congress votes down on the deal, sanctions would remain in place, but the president would have the power to veto the joint resolution. This would then force the issue, with Congress being required to garner a two-thirds majority in order to override the presidential veto and keep the sanctions in place.*

*The debate persisted as the P5+1 and Iran approached the 30 June deadline for a final JCPOA, with both congressional representatives and Israeli leaders continuing to press the Obama administration by arguing that the deal would “pave Iran’s path to the bomb” and lead to more strife in the region.*

*Documents and source materials are reproduced here without editing to conform to JPS style or spelling.*

## The Framework Agreement

A. EU FOREIGN POLICY CHIEF FEDERICA MOGHERINI AND IRANIAN FM MOHAMMAD JAVAD ZARIF, “IRAN NUCLEAR PLAN,” LAUSANNE, 2 APRIL 2015

*After a series of meetings held between 26 March and 2 April in Lausanne, Switzerland, EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini and Iranian foreign minister Mohammad Javad Zarif announced that the P5+1 and Iran had reached a framework agreement setting the parameters for a comprehensive deal on Iran’s nuclear program. Presented below is the full transcript of the announcement, summarizing the framework agreement and outlining the final steps required to arrive at what is termed a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). The statement is available at [eeas.europa.eu](http://eeas.europa.eu).*

We, the EU High Representative and the Foreign Minister of the I.R. of Iran, together with the Foreign Ministers of the E3+3 (China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States), met from 26 March to 2nd April 2015 in Switzerland. As agreed in November 2013, we gathered here to find solutions towards reaching a comprehensive resolution that will ensure the exclusively peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme and the comprehensive lifting of all sanctions.

Today, we have taken a decisive step: we have reached solutions on key parameters of a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). The political determination, the good will, and the hard work of all parties made it possible. Let us thank all delegations for their tireless dedication.

This is a crucial decision laying the agreed basis for the final text of the JCPOA. We can now restart drafting the text and annexes of the JCPOA, guided by the solutions developed in these days.

As Iran pursues a peaceful nuclear programme, Iran’s enrichment capacity, enrichment level and stockpile will be limited for specified durations, and there will be no other enrichment facility than Natanz. Iran’s research and development on centrifuges will be carried out on a scope and schedule that has been mutually agreed.

Fordow will be converted from an enrichment site into a nuclear, physics and technology centre. International collaboration will be encouraged in agreed areas of research. There will not be any

fissile material at Fordow. An international joint venture will assist Iran in redesigning and rebuilding a modernized Heavy Water Research Reactor in Arak that will not produce weapons grade plutonium. There will be no reprocessing and the spent fuel will be exported. A set of measures have been agreed to monitor the provisions of the JCPOA including implementation of the modified Code 3.1 and provisional application of the Additional Protocol. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) will be permitted the use of modern technologies and will have enhanced access through agreed procedures, including to clarify past and present issues. Iran will take part in international cooperation in the field of civilian nuclear energy which can include supply of power and research reactors. Another important area of cooperation will be in the field of nuclear safety and security. The EU will terminate the implementation of all nuclear-related economic and financial sanctions and the US will cease the application of all nuclear-related secondary economic and financial sanctions, simultaneously with the IAEA-verified implementation by Iran of its key nuclear commitments.

A new UN Security Council Resolution will endorse the JCPOA, terminate all previous nuclear-related resolutions and incorporate certain restrictive measures for a mutually agreed period of time.

We will now work to write the text of a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action including its technical details in the coming weeks and months at the political and experts [*sic*] levels. We are committed to complete our efforts by June 30th. We would like to thank the Swiss government for its generous support in hosting these negotiations.

#### **B. U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, "PARAMETERS FOR A JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF ACTION REGARDING THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM," WASHINGTON, 2 APRIL 2015**

Below are the key parameters of a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) regarding the Islamic Republic of Iran's nuclear program that were decided in Lausanne, Switzerland. These elements form the foundation upon which the final text of the JCPOA will be written between now and June 30, and reflect the significant progress that has been made in discussions between the P5+1, the European Union, and Iran. Important implementation details are still subject to negotiation, and nothing is agreed until everything is agreed. We will work to conclude the JCPOA based on these parameters over the coming months.

#### ***Enrichment***

- Iran has agreed to reduce by approximately two-thirds its installed centrifuges. Iran will go from having about 19,000 installed today to 6,104 installed under the deal, with only 5,060 of these enriching uranium for 10 years. All 6,104 centrifuges will be IR-1s, Iran's first-generation centrifuge.
- Iran has agreed to not enrich uranium over 3.67 percent for at least 15 years.
- Iran has agreed to reduce its current stockpile of about 10,000 kg of low-enriched uranium (LEU) to 300 kg of 3.67 percent LEU for 15 years.
- All excess centrifuges and enrichment infrastructure will be placed in IAEA monitored storage and will be used only as replacements for operating centrifuges and equipment.
- Iran has agreed to not build any new facilities for the purpose of enriching uranium for 15 years.

- Iran's breakout timeline—the time that it would take for Iran to acquire enough fissile material for one weapon—is currently assessed to be 2 to 3 months. That timeline will be extended to at least one year, for a duration of at least ten years, under this framework.

**Iran will convert its facility at Fordow so that it is no longer used to enrich uranium.**

- Iran has agreed to not enrich uranium at its Fordow facility for at least 15 years.
- Iran has agreed to convert its Fordow facility so that it is used for peaceful purposes only—into a nuclear, physics, technology, research center.
- Iran has agreed to not conduct research and development associated with uranium enrichment at Fordow for 15 years.
- Iran will not have any fissile material at Fordow for 15 years.
- Almost two-thirds of Fordow's centrifuges and infrastructure will be removed. The remaining centrifuges will not enrich uranium. All centrifuges and related infrastructure will be placed under IAEA monitoring.

**Iran will only enrich uranium at the Natanz facility, with only 5,060 IR-1 first-generation centrifuges for ten years.**

- Iran has agreed to only enrich uranium using its first generation (IR-1 models) centrifuges at Natanz for ten years, removing its more advanced centrifuges.
- Iran will remove the 1,000 IR-2M centrifuges currently installed at Natanz and place them in IAEA monitored storage for ten years.
- Iran will not use its IR-2, IR-4, IR-5, IR-6, or IR-8 models to produce enriched uranium for at least ten years. Iran will engage in limited research and development with its advanced centrifuges, according to a schedule and parameters which have been agreed to by the P5+1.
- For ten years, enrichment and enrichment research and development will be limited to ensure a breakout timeline of at least 1 year. Beyond 10 years, Iran will abide by its enrichment and enrichment R&D plan submitted to the IAEA, and pursuant to the JCPOA, under the Additional Protocol resulting in certain limitations on enrichment capacity.

***Inspections and Transparency***

- The IAEA will have regular access to all of Iran's nuclear facilities, including to Iran's enrichment facility at Natanz and its former enrichment facility at Fordow, and including the use of the most up-to-date, modern monitoring technologies.
- Inspectors will have access to the supply chain that supports Iran's nuclear program. The new transparency and inspections mechanisms will closely monitor materials and/or components to prevent diversion to a secret program.
- Inspectors will have access to uranium mines and continuous surveillance at uranium mills, where Iran produces yellowcake, for 25 years.
- Inspectors will have continuous surveillance of Iran's centrifuge rotors and bellows production and storage facilities for 20 years. Iran's centrifuge manufacturing base will be frozen and under continuous surveillance.
- All centrifuges and enrichment infrastructure removed from Fordow and Natanz will be placed under continuous monitoring by the IAEA.

- A dedicated procurement channel for Iran's nuclear program will be established to monitor and approve, on a case by case basis, the supply, sale, or transfer to Iran of certain nuclear-related and dual use materials and technology—an additional transparency measure.
- Iran has agreed to implement the Additional Protocol of the IAEA, providing the IAEA much greater access and information regarding Iran's nuclear program, including both declared and undeclared facilities.
- Iran will be required to grant access to the IAEA to investigate suspicious sites or allegations of a covert enrichment facility, conversion facility, centrifuge production facility, or yellowcake production facility anywhere in the country.
- Iran has agreed to implement Modified Code 3.1 requiring early notification of construction of new facilities.
- Iran will implement an agreed set of measures to address the IAEA's concerns regarding the Possible Military Dimensions (PMD) of its program.

### ***Reactors and Reprocessing***

- Iran has agreed to redesign and rebuild a heavy water research reactor in Arak, based on a design that is agreed to by the P5+1, which will not produce weapons grade plutonium, and which will support peaceful nuclear research and radioisotope production.
- The original core of the reactor, which would have enabled the production of significant quantities of weapons-grade plutonium, will be destroyed or removed from the country.
- Iran will ship all of its spent fuel from the reactor out of the country for the reactor's lifetime.
- Iran has committed indefinitely to not conduct reprocessing or reprocessing research and development on spent nuclear fuel.
- Iran will not accumulate heavy water in excess of the needs of the modified Arak reactor, and will sell any remaining heavy water on the international market for 15 years.
- Iran will not build any additional heavy water reactors for 15 years.

### ***Sanctions***

- Iran will receive sanctions relief, if it verifiably abides by its commitments.
- U.S. and E.U. nuclear-related sanctions will be suspended after the IAEA has verified that Iran has taken all of its key nuclear-related steps. If at any time Iran fails to fulfill its commitments, these sanctions will snap back into place.
- The architecture of U.S. nuclear-related sanctions on Iran will be retained for much of the duration of the deal and allow for snap-back of sanctions in the event of significant non-performance.
- All past UN Security Council resolutions on the Iran nuclear issue will be lifted simultaneous with the completion, by Iran, of nuclear-related actions addressing all key concerns (enrichment, Fordow, Arak, PMD, and transparency).
- However, core provisions in the UN Security Council resolutions—those that deal with transfers of sensitive technologies and activities—will be re-established by a new UN Security Council resolution that will endorse the JCPOA and urge its full implementation. It will also create the procurement channel mentioned above, which will serve as a key transparency measure. Important

restrictions on conventional arms and ballistic missiles, as well as provisions that allow for related cargo inspections and asset freezes, will also be incorporated by this new resolution.

- A dispute resolution process will be specified, which enables any JCPOA participant, to seek to resolve disagreements about the performance of JCPOA commitments.
- If an issue of significant non-performance cannot be resolved through that process, then all previous UN sanctions could be re-imposed.
- U.S. sanctions on Iran for terrorism, human rights abuses, and ballistic missiles will remain in place under the deal.

### ***Phasing***

- For ten years, Iran will limit domestic enrichment capacity and research and development—ensuring a breakout timeline of at least one year. Beyond that, Iran will be bound by its longer-term enrichment and enrichment research and development plan it shared with the P5+1.
- For fifteen years, Iran will limit additional elements of its program. For instance, Iran will not build new enrichment facilities or heavy water reactors and will limit its stockpile of enriched uranium and accept enhanced transparency procedures.
- Important inspections and transparency measures will continue well beyond 15 years. Iran's adherence to the Additional Protocol of the IAEA is permanent, including its significant access and transparency obligations. The robust inspections of Iran's uranium supply chain will last for 25 years.
- Even after the period of the most stringent limitations on Iran's nuclear program, Iran will remain a party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which prohibits Iran's development or acquisition of nuclear weapons and requires IAEA safeguards on its nuclear program.

## **Israel and the U.S. Congress**

### **C. HOUSE DEMOCRATS, LETTER TO SPEAKER JOHN BOEHNER TO POSTPONE ISRAELI PM BENJAMIN NETANYAHU'S SPEECH TO CONGRESS, WASHINGTON, 18 FEBRUARY 2015**

Dear Mr. Speaker:

We write to urge you to postpone your invitation to Prime Minister Netanyahu to address a joint session of Congress in March. Israel is a valued ally and Israeli Prime Ministers have a long history of addressing Congress. As members of Congress who support Israel, we share concern that it appears that you are using a foreign leader as a political tool against the President. We very much appreciate that Prime Minister Netanyahu has twice had the honor of speaking before a joint session.

However, at this time your invitation is contrary to the standards by which our Congress operates and has the potential to harm U.S. Foreign policy.

The timing of this invitation and lack of coordination with the White House indicate that this is not an ordinary diplomatic visit. Rather this appears to be an attempt to promote new sanctions legislation against Iran that could undermine critical negotiations between the P5+1 and Iran. At the State of the Union President Obama made it clear that he will veto new Iran sanctions legislation. The invitation to Prime Minister Netanyahu enlists a foreign leader to influence a

Presidential policy initiative. We should be able to disagree on foreign policy within our American political system and without undermining the presidency.

Aside from being improper, this places Israel, a close and valued ally, in the middle of a policy debate between Congress and the White House. We should not turn our diplomatic friendship into a partisan issue. Beyond threatening our diplomatic priorities, the timing of this invitation offers the Congressional platform to elevate a candidate in a foreign election.

A visit from Israel's Prime Minister would normally be an occasion for bipartisan cooperation and support. Our relationship with Israel is too important to use as a pawn in political gamesmanship. We strongly urge you to postpone this invitation until Israelis have cast their ballots and the deadline for diplomatic negotiations with Iran has passed. When the Israeli Prime Minister visits us outside the specter of partisan politics, we will be delighted and honored to greet him or her on the Floor of the House.

Sincerely,

Keith Ellison

Maxine Waters

André Carson

Danny K. Davis

Luis V. Gutiérrez

Eddie Bernice Johnson

Betty McCollum

Jim McDermott

Donald M. Payne, Jr.

Mark Pocan

Bonnie Watson Coleman

John A. Yarmuth

Steve Cohen

Earl Blumenauer

John Conyers, Jr.

Peter A. DeFazio

Henry C. "Hank"

Johnson, Jr.

Barbara Lee

James P. McGovern

Beto O'Rourke

Chellie Pingree

Mark Takano

Peter Welch

#### D. ISRAELI PM BENJAMIN NETANYAHU, REMARKS BEFORE THE U.S. CONGRESS REGARDING THE IRAN NUCLEAR THREAT, WASHINGTON, 3 MARCH 2015 (EXCERPTS)

*At the invitation of the U.S. Speaker of the House John Boehner, on 3 March, Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu addressed a joint session of Congress on the dangers of Iran's nuclear program. Netanyahu, who has vocally opposed any negotiations with Iran, argued that the framework agreement under discussion with the P5+1 would not impede Iran's ability to develop a nuclear weapon and he called on Congress to block the deal through legislative action. Presented below are excerpts from the address. The full transcript is available at [pmo.gov.il](http://pmo.gov.il).*

My friends, I've come here today because, as Prime Minister of Israel, I feel a profound obligation to speak to you about an issue that could well threaten the survival of my country and the future of my people: Iran's quest for nuclear weapons.

We're an ancient people. In our nearly 4,000 years of history, many have tried repeatedly to destroy the Jewish people. Tomorrow night, on the Jewish holiday of Purim, we'll read the Book of Esther. We'll read of a powerful Persian viceroy named Haman, who plotted to destroy the Jewish people some 2,500 years ago. But a courageous Jewish woman, Queen Esther, exposed the plot and gave for the Jewish people the right to defend themselves against their enemies. The plot was foiled. Our people were saved.



Today the Jewish people face another attempt by yet another Persian potentate to destroy us. Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei spews the oldest hatred, the oldest hatred of anti-Semitism with the newest technology. He tweets that Israel must be annihilated—he tweets. You know, in Iran, there isn't exactly free Internet. But he tweets in English that Israel must be destroyed.

For those who believe that Iran threatens the Jewish state, but not the Jewish people, listen to Hassan Nasrallah, the leader of Hezbollah, Iran's chief terrorist proxy. He said: If all the Jews gather in Israel, it will save us the trouble of chasing them down around the world.

But Iran's regime is not merely a Jewish problem, any more than the Nazi regime was merely a Jewish problem. The 6 million Jews murdered by the Nazis were but a fraction of the 60 million people killed in World War II. So, too, Iran's regime poses a grave threat, not only to Israel, but also the peace of the entire world. To understand just how dangerous Iran would be with nuclear weapons, we must fully understand the nature of the regime. The people of Iran are very talented people. They're heirs to one of the world's great civilizations. But in 1979, they were hijacked by religious zealots—religious zealots who imposed on them immediately a dark and brutal dictatorship.

That year, the zealots drafted a constitution, a new one for Iran. It directed the revolutionary guards not only to protect Iran's borders, but also to fulfill the ideological mission of jihad. The regime's founder, Ayatollah Khomeini, exhorted his followers to “export the revolution throughout the world.”

I'm standing here in Washington, D.C. and the difference is so stark. America's founding document promises life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Iran's founding document pledges death, tyranny, and the pursuit of jihad. And as states are collapsing across the Middle East, Iran is charging into the void to do just that.

Iran's goons in Gaza, its lackeys in Lebanon, its revolutionary guards on the Golan Heights are clutching Israel with three tentacles of terror. Backed by Iran, Assad is slaughtering Syrians. Backed by Iran, Shiite militias are rampaging through Iraq. Backed by Iran, Houthis are seizing control of Yemen, threatening the strategic straits at the mouth of the Red Sea. Along with the Straits of Hormuz, that would give Iran a second choke-point on the world's oil supply. Just last week, near Hormuz, Iran carried out a military exercise blowing up a mock U.S. aircraft carrier. That's just last week, while they're having nuclear talks with the United States. But unfortunately, for the last 36 years, Iran's attacks against the United States have been anything but mock. And the targets have been all too real.

Iran took dozens of Americans hostage in Tehran, murdered hundreds of American soldiers, Marines, in Beirut, and was responsible for killing and maiming thousands of American service men and women in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Beyond the Middle East, Iran attacks America and its allies through its global terror network. It blew up the Jewish community center and the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires. It helped Al Qaida bomb U.S. embassies in Africa. It even attempted to assassinate the Saudi ambassador, right here in Washington, D.C.

In the Middle East, Iran now dominates four Arab capitals, Baghdad, Damascus, Beirut and Sanaa. And if Iran's aggression is left unchecked, more will surely follow.

So, at a time when many hope that Iran will join the community of nations, Iran is busy gobbling up the nations. We must all stand together to stop Iran's march of conquest, subjugation, and terror.

Now, two years ago, we were told to give President Rouhani and Foreign Minister Zarif a chance to bring change and moderation to Iran. Some change! Some moderation! Rouhani's government hangs gays, persecutes Christians, jails journalists, and executes even more prisoners than before.

Last year, the same Zarif who charms Western diplomats laid a wreath at the grave of Imad Mughniyeh. Imad Mughniyeh is the terrorist mastermind who spilled more American blood than any other terrorist besides Osama bin Laden. I'd like to see someone ask him a question about that.

Iran's regime is as radical as ever, its cries of "Death to America," that same America that it calls the "Great Satan," as loud as ever. Now, this shouldn't be surprising, because the ideology of Iran's revolutionary regime is deeply rooted in militant Islam, and that's why this regime will always be an enemy of America.

Don't be fooled. The battle between Iran and ISIS doesn't turn Iran into a friend of America. Iran and ISIS are competing for the crown of militant Islam. One calls itself the Islamic Republic. The other calls itself the Islamic State. Both want to impose a militant Islamic empire first on the region and then on the entire world. They just disagree among themselves who will be the ruler of that empire.

In this deadly game of thrones, there's no place for America or for Israel, no peace for Christians, Jews or Muslims who don't share the Islamist medieval creed, no rights for women, no freedom for anyone. So when it comes to Iran and ISIS, the enemy of your enemy is your enemy.

The difference is that ISIS is armed with butcher knives, captured weapons, and YouTube, whereas Iran could soon be armed with intercontinental ballistic missiles and nuclear bombs. We must always remember—I'll say it one more time—the greatest danger facing our world is the marriage of militant Islam with nuclear weapons. To defeat ISIS and let Iran get nuclear weapons would be to win the battle, but lose the war. We can't let that happen.

But that, my friends, is exactly what could happen, if the deal now being negotiated is accepted by Iran. That deal will not prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons. It would all but guarantee that Iran gets those weapons, lots of them.

Let me explain why. While the final deal has not yet been signed, certain elements of any potential deal are now a matter of public record. You don't need intelligence agencies and secret information to know this. You can Google it. Absent a dramatic change, we know for sure that any deal with Iran will include two major concessions to Iran.

The first major concession would leave Iran with a vast nuclear infrastructure, providing it with a short breakout time to the bomb. Breakout time is the time it takes to amass enough weapons-grade uranium or plutonium for a nuclear bomb.

According to the deal, not a single nuclear facility would be demolished. Thousands of centrifuges used to enrich uranium would be left spinning. Thousands more would be temporarily disconnected, but not destroyed.

Because Iran's nuclear program would be left largely intact, Iran's breakout time would be very short—about a year by U.S. assessment, even shorter by Israel's.

And if Iran's work on advanced centrifuges, faster and faster centrifuges, is not stopped, that breakout time could still be shorter, a lot shorter.

True, certain restrictions would be imposed on Iran's nuclear program and Iran's adherence to those restrictions would be supervised by international inspectors. But here's the problem. You see, inspectors document violations; they don't stop them. [ . . . ]

The U.N.'s nuclear watchdog agency, the IAEA, said again yesterday that Iran still refuses to come clean about its military nuclear program. Iran was also caught—caught twice, not once, twice—operating secret nuclear facilities in Natanz and Qom, facilities that inspectors didn't even know existed.

Right now, Iran could be hiding nuclear facilities that we don't know about, the U.S. and Israel. As the former head of inspections for the IAEA said in 2013, he said, "If there's no undeclared installation today in Iran, it will be the first time in 20 years that it doesn't have one." Iran has proven time and again that it cannot be trusted. And that's why the first major concession is a source of great concern. It leaves Iran with a vast nuclear infrastructure and relies on inspectors to prevent a breakout. That concession creates a real danger that Iran could get to the bomb by violating the deal.

But the second major concession creates an even greater danger that Iran could get to the bomb by keeping the deal. Because virtually all the restrictions on Iran's nuclear program will automatically expire in about a decade. Now, a decade may seem like a long time in political life, but it's the blink of an eye in the life of a nation. It's a blink of an eye in the life of our children. We all have a responsibility to consider what will happen when Iran's nuclear capabilities are virtually unrestricted and all the sanctions will have been lifted. Iran would then be free to build a huge nuclear capacity that could produce many, many nuclear bombs.

Iran's Supreme Leader says that openly. He says Iran plans to have 190,000 centrifuges, not 6,000 or even the 19,000 that Iran has today, but 10 times that amount—190,000 centrifuges enriching uranium. With this massive capacity, Iran could make the fuel for an entire nuclear arsenal and this in a matter of weeks, once it makes that decision.

My long-time friend, John Kerry, Secretary of State, confirmed last week that Iran could legitimately possess that massive centrifuge capacity when the deal expires.

Now I want you to think about that. The foremost sponsor of global terrorism could be weeks away from having enough enriched uranium for an entire arsenal of nuclear weapons and this with full international legitimacy.

And by the way, if Iran's intercontinental ballistic missile program is not part of the deal, and so far, Iran refuses to even put it on the negotiating table. Well, Iran could have the means to deliver that nuclear arsenal to the far-reaching corners of the Earth, including to every part of the United States. So you see, my friends, this deal has two major concessions: one, leaving Iran with a vast nuclear program and two, lifting the restrictions on that program in about a decade. That's why this deal is so bad. It doesn't block Iran's path to the bomb; it paves Iran's path to the bomb.

So why would anyone make this deal? Because they hope that Iran will change for the better in the coming years, or they believe that the alternative to this deal is worse?

Well, I disagree. I don't believe that Iran's radical regime will change for the better after this deal. This regime has been in power for 36 years, and its voracious appetite for aggression grows with each passing year. This deal would only whet Iran's appetite for more. [. . .]

Why should Iran's radical regime change for the better when it can enjoy the best of both worlds: aggression abroad, prosperity at home?

This is a question that everyone asks in our region. Israel's neighbors, Iran's neighbors, know that Iran will become even more aggressive and sponsor even more terrorism when its economy

is unshackled and it's been given a clear path to the bomb. And many of these neighbors say they'll respond by racing to get nuclear weapons of their own. So this deal won't change Iran for the better; it will only change the Middle East for the worse. A deal that's supposed to prevent nuclear proliferation would instead spark a nuclear arms race in the most dangerous part of the planet.

This deal won't be a farewell to arms. It would be a farewell to arms control. And the Middle East would soon be crisscrossed by nuclear tripwires. A region where small skirmishes can trigger big wars would turn into a nuclear tinderbox. [ . . . ]

Ladies and gentlemen, I've come here today to tell you we don't have to bet the security of the world on the hope that Iran will change for the better. We don't have to gamble with our future and with our children's future.

We can insist that restrictions on Iran's nuclear program not be lifted for as long as Iran continues its aggression in the region and in the world. Before lifting those restrictions, the world should demand that Iran do three things. First, stop its aggression against its neighbors in the Middle East. Second, stop supporting terrorism around the world. And third, stop threatening to annihilate my country, Israel, the one and only Jewish state.

If the world powers are not prepared to insist that Iran change its behavior before a deal is signed, at the very least they should insist that Iran change its behavior before a deal expires. If Iran changes its behavior, the restrictions would be lifted. If Iran doesn't change its behavior, the restrictions should not be lifted. If Iran wants to be treated like a normal country, let it act like a normal country.

My friends, what about the argument that there's no alternative to this deal, that Iran's nuclear know-how cannot be erased, that its nuclear program is so advanced that the best we can do is delay the inevitable, which is essentially what the proposed deal seeks to do.

Well, nuclear know-how without nuclear infrastructure doesn't get you very much. A racecar driver without a car can't drive. A pilot without a plane can't fly. Without thousands of centrifuges, tons of enriched uranium or heavy water facilities, Iran can't make nuclear weapons.

Iran's nuclear program can be rolled back well-beyond the current proposal by insisting on a better deal and keeping up the pressure on a very vulnerable regime, especially given the recent collapse in the price of oil.

Now, if Iran threatens to walk away from the table—and this often happens in a Persian bazaar—call their bluff. They'll be back, because they need the deal a lot more than you do.

And by maintaining the pressure on Iran and on those who do business with Iran, you have the power to make them need it even more. My friends, for over a year, we've been told that no deal is better than a bad deal. Well, this is a bad deal. It's a very bad deal. We're better off without it.

Now we're being told that the only alternative to this bad deal is war. That's just not true. The alternative to this bad deal is a much better deal: a better deal that doesn't leave Iran with a vast nuclear infrastructure and such a short breakout time; a better deal that keeps the restrictions on Iran's nuclear program in place until Iran's aggression ends; a better deal that won't give Iran an easy path to the bomb; a better deal that Israel and its neighbors may not like, but with which we could live, literally. And no country has a greater stake—no country has a greater stake than Israel in a good deal that peacefully removes this threat. [ . . . ]

**E. "LEAKED MOSSAD CABLE ON IRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM," AL JAZEERA, 23 FEBRUARY 2015**

6. EVEN THOUGH IRAN HAS ACCUMULATED ENOUGH 5% ENRICHED URANIUM FOR SEVERAL BOMBS, AND HAS ENRICHED SOME OF IT TO 20%, IT DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE READY TO ENRICH IT TO HIGHER LEVELS. IT IS ALLOCATING SOME OF IT TO PRODUCE NUCLEAR FUEL FOR THE TRR, AND THE AMOUNT OF 20% ENRICHED URANIUM IS THEREFORE NOT INCREASING.
7. WE UNDERSTAND THAT IRAN IS MAKING EFFORTS TO PUT THE IR40 INTO OPERATION AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. WE ASSESS THAT THIS WILL NOT HAPPEN BEFORE MID-2014. THIS REACTOR IS EXPECTED TO PRODUCE ENOUGH MILITARY-GRADE PLUTONIUM FOR ONE BOMB PER YEAR, BUT IN THE ABSENCE OF A NUCLEAR FUEL REPROCESSING PLANT (UNKNOWN IN IRAN), THIS PLUTONIUM WILL NOT BE ABLE TO BE USED FOR WEAPONS.

**F. IRANIAN AMB. TO THE UN GHOLAMALI KHOSHROO, "NETANYAHU'S NUCLEAR DECEPTIONS," *THE NEW YORK TIMES*, 3 MARCH 2015**

In the address on Tuesday to the United States Congress by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel, we witnessed a new peak in the long-running hype over Iran's nuclear energy program. Yet all his predictions about how close Iran was to acquiring a nuclear bomb have proved baseless.

Despite that, alarmist rhetoric on the theme has been a staple of Mr. Netanyahu's career. In an interview with the BBC in 1997, he accused Iran of secretly "building a formidable arsenal of ballistic missiles," predicting that eventually Manhattan would be within range. In 1996, he stood before Congress and urged other nations to join him to prevent Iran from gaining nuclear capability, stressing that "time is running out." Earlier, as a member of Parliament, in 1992, he predicted that Iran would be able to produce a nuclear weapon within three to five years.

In front of world leaders at the United Nations in September 2012, Mr. Netanyahu escalated his warnings by declaring that Iran could acquire the bomb within a year. It is ironic that in doing so, he apparently disregarded the assessment of his own secret service: A recently revealed document showed that the Mossad, Israel's intelligence agency, had advised that Iran was "not performing the activity necessary to produce weapons." The United States intelligence community had reached the same conclusion in its National Intelligence Estimate.

Despite extensive inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency, no evidence has ever been presented to contradict the clear commitment by Iran's leaders that they would under no circumstances engage in manufacturing, stockpiling and using nuclear weapons. In 2013, for example, only Japan, which has many more nuclear facilities than Iran, was subject to greater agency scrutiny.

Yet, in his speech this week, Mr. Netanyahu claimed the agency had determined that Iran had “a military nuclear program.” This is a gross distortion of the agency’s position. The “possible military dimensions,” which Mr. Netanyahu amplifies on every available occasion, are based not on the agency’s findings but on referrals by other member states with their own political agendas. In one case, in 2012, a former agency director dismissed such a report “because there was no chain of custody for the paper, no clear source, document markings, date of issue or anything else that could establish its authenticity.”

Iran has also alerted the agency to many errors in the relevant documents, and our position has been confirmed by independent nonproliferation experts. We will nevertheless continue to work with the agency to resolve this issue—despite our skepticism, which leads us to recall the notorious forged document about Niger’s “yellowcake” uranium that was used to coax the Security Council into authorizing the invasion of Iraq in 2003.

As one side of the talks that continue in Geneva, Iran can also bear testimony to the campaign of misinformation by Mr. Netanyahu to mislead the global public about the details of those nuclear negotiations. When the parties were finalizing the interim agreement in 2013, Mr. Netanyahu claimed that it would involve Iran’s receiving \$50 billion in sanctions relief; the actual amount was about \$7 billion. And as for his prediction that Iran would never abide by the terms of the accord, Iran has dutifully stood by every commitment—as the International Atomic Energy Agency has reported.

In our view, Mr. Netanyahu has consistently used these false alarms and outlandish claims both to serve his domestic political maneuvering and to create a smoke screen that relegates the Palestinian question to the margins. We have noted how his rhetoric has intensified in proportion to the international pressure on Israel to stop the settlement activity and end the occupation of the Palestinian territory.

The paradox of the situation is that a government that has built a stockpile of nuclear weapons, rejected calls to establish a nuclear-weapons-free zone in the Middle East, made military incursions into neighboring states and flouted international law by keeping the lands of other nations under occupation, now makes such a big fuss over a country, Iran, that has not invaded another country since America became a sovereign nation.

Mr. Netanyahu seems to be in a state of panic at the prospect of losing this tool with which to attack Iran, as we do all in our power to address the genuine concerns of the international community and arrive at a settlement over our country’s nuclear energy program. Iran’s efforts, epitomized by the 2013 interim agreement, aim to resolve the issue with the P5-plus-1 group of countries (the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, plus Germany). Since Israel’s prime minister appears to be a person who thrives on chaos and conflict, we fear that he may have further plans to poison the atmosphere and sow discord among those involved in this historic effort.

There are other great issues at hand in the Middle East. The violent extremism we see in Syria and Iraq is one, and to fight it effectively, we need to ease international tensions. We must all address the problem of the breeding grounds that are delivering fresh recruits to the terrorist cause. Israeli aggression and the occupation of Palestinian territories have always been of major propaganda value for extremist recruitment.

During the quarter-century that Mr. Netanyahu and his allies have tried to keep Iran's nuclear program at the forefront of the global agenda, they increased the number of illegal settlers in the West Bank and East Jerusalem to more than 750,000 from about 300,000. At the same time, Palestinians have continued to be evicted from their homes and land. This historic wrong, coupled with the blockade of Gaza, is the real ticking bomb in the Middle East. The whole world should work to defuse it by rising above petty politics and the lobbying of narrow-minded pressure groups.

**G. SENATE REPUBLICANS, "AN OPEN LETTER TO THE LEADERS OF IRAN," WASHINGTON, 9 MARCH 2015**

An Open Letter to the Leaders of the Islamic Republic of Iran:

It has come to our attention while observing your nuclear negotiations with our government that you may not fully understand our constitutional system. Thus, we are writing to bring to your attention two features of our Constitution—the power to make binding international agreements and the different character of federal offices—which you should seriously consider as negotiations progress.

First, under our Constitution, while the president negotiates international agreements, Congress plays the significant role of ratifying them. In the case of a treaty, the Senate must ratify it by a two-thirds vote. A so-called congressional-executive agreement requires a majority vote in both the House and the Senate (which, because of procedural rules, effectively means a three-fifths vote in the Senate). Anything not approved by Congress is a mere executive agreement.

Second, the offices of our Constitution have different characteristics. For example, the president may serve only two 4-year terms, whereas senators may serve an unlimited number of 6-year terms. As applied today, for instance, President Obama will leave office in January 2017, while most of us will remain in office well beyond then—perhaps decades.

What these two constitutional provisions mean is that we will consider any agreement regarding your nuclear-weapons program that is not approved by the Congress as nothing more than an executive agreement between President Obama and Ayatollah Khamenei. The next president could revoke such an executive agreement with the stroke of a pen and future Congresses could modify the terms of the agreement at any time.

We hope this letter enriches your knowledge of our constitutional system and promotes mutual understanding and clarity as nuclear negotiations progress.

Sincerely,

Richard Shelby  
Jeff Sessions  
Dan Sullivan  
John McCain  
John Boozman  
Tom Cotton  
Cory Gardner  
Marco Rubio

Johnny Isakson  
David Perdue  
Mike Crapo  
Jim Risch  
Mark Kirk  
Chuck Grassley  
Joni Ernst  
Pat Roberts

Jerry Moran  
Mitch McConnell  
Rand Paul  
David Vitter  
Bill Cassidy  
Roger Wicker  
Roy Blunt  
Steve Daines

Deb Fischer	Jim Inhofe	Ted Cruz
Ben Sasse	James Lankford	Orin Hatch
Dean Heller	Pat Toomey	Mike Lee
Kelly Ayotte	Lindsey Graham	Shelley Moore
Richard Burr	Tim Scott	Capito
Thom Tillis	John Thune	Ron Johnson
John Hoeven	Mike Rounds	Mike Enzi
Rob Portman	John Cornyn	John Barrasso

#### H. IRANIAN FM MOHAMMAD JAVAD ZARIF, RESPONSE TO REPUBLICANS' OPEN LETTER TO THE LEADERS OF IRAN, NEW YORK, 9 MARCH 2015

*Shortly after the Senate Republicans' open letter to Iran's leadership was made public on 9 March (see Special Doc. G above), Iranian foreign minister Mohammad Javad Zarif issued a response in which he criticized its authors' understanding of international law and the U.S. Constitution. His statement, reproduced below, was released by Iran's Permanent Mission to the UN and made available online the same day by the United States Institute of Peace on the Iran Primer blog at <http://iranprimer.usip.org/blog>.*

Asked about the open letter of 47 US Senators to Iranian leaders, the Iranian Foreign Minister, Dr. Javad Zarif, responded that “in our view, this letter has no legal value and is mostly a propaganda ploy. It is very interesting that while negotiations are still in progress and while no agreement has been reached, some political pressure groups are so afraid even of the prospect of an agreement that they resort to unconventional methods, unprecedented in diplomatic history. This indicates that like Netanyahu, who considers peace as an existential threat, some are opposed to any agreement, regardless of its content.”

Zarif expressed astonishment that some members of [the] US Congress find it appropriate to write to leaders of another country against their own President and administration. He pointed out that from reading the open letter, it seems that the authors not only do not understand international law, but are not fully cognizant of the nuances of their own Constitution when it comes to presidential powers in the conduct of foreign policy.

Foreign Minister Zarif added that “I should bring one important point to the attention of the authors and that is, the world is not the United States, and the conduct of inter-state relations is governed by international law, and not by US domestic law. The authors may not fully understand that in international law, governments represent the entirety of their respective states, are responsible for the conduct of foreign affairs, are required to fulfil the obligations they undertake with other states and may not invoke their internal law as justification for failure to perform their international obligations.”

The Iranian Foreign Minister added that “change of administration does not in any way relieve the next administration from international obligations undertaken by its predecessor in a possible agreement about Iran's peaceful nuclear program.” He continued “I wish to enlighten the authors that if the next administration revokes any agreement with ‘the stroke of a pen,’ as they boast, it



will have simply committed a blatant violation of international law.” He emphasized that if the current negotiation with P5+1 result [sic] in a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, it will not be a bilateral agreement between Iran and the US, but rather one that will be concluded with the participation of five other countries, including all permanent members of the Security Council, and will also be endorsed by a Security Council resolution.

Zarif expressed the hope that his comments “may enrich the knowledge of the authors to recognize that according to international law, Congress may not ‘modify the terms of the agreement at any time’ as they claim, and if Congress adopts any measure to impede its implementation, it will have committed a material breach of US obligations.”

The Foreign Minister also informed the authors that [the] majority of US international agreements in recent decades are in fact what the signatories describe as “mere executive agreements” and not treaties ratified by the Senate. He reminded them that “their letter in fact undermines the credibility of thousands of such ‘mere executive agreements’ that have been or will be entered into by the US with various other governments.”

Zarif concluded by stating that “the Islamic Republic of Iran has entered these negotiations in good faith and with the political will to reach an agreement, and it is imperative for our counterparts to prove similar good faith and political will in order to make an agreement possible.”

#### I. THOMAS FRIEDMAN’S INTERVIEW OF U.S. PRES. BARACK OBAMA, “IRAN AND THE OBAMA DOCTRINE,” *THE NEW YORK TIMES*, 5 APRIL 2015 (EXCERPTS)

##### ***What Is the “Obama Doctrine”?***

“We are powerful enough to be able to test these propositions without putting ourselves at risk. And that’s the thing . . . people don’t seem to understand,” the president said. [. . .] “Iran’s defense budget is \$30 billion. Our defense budget is closer to \$600 billion. Iran understands that they cannot fight us. . . . You asked about an Obama doctrine. The doctrine is: We will engage, but we preserve all our capabilities.”

The notion that Iran is undeterrable—“it’s simply not the case,” he added. “And so for us to say, ‘Let’s try’—understanding that we’re preserving all our options, that we’re not naïve—but if in fact we can resolve these issues diplomatically, we are more likely to be safe, more likely to be secure, in a better position to protect our allies, and who knows? Iran may change. If it doesn’t, our deterrence capabilities, our military superiority stays in place. . . . We’re not relinquishing our capacity to defend ourselves or our allies. In that situation, why wouldn’t we test it?”

Obviously, Israel is in a different situation, he added. “Now, what you might hear from Prime Minister [Benjamin] Netanyahu, which I respect, is the notion, ‘Look, Israel is more vulnerable. We don’t have the luxury of testing these propositions the way you do,’ and I completely understand that. And further, I completely understand Israel’s belief that given the tragic history of the Jewish people, they can’t be dependent solely on us for their own security. But what I would say to them is that not only am I absolutely committed to making sure that they maintain their qualitative military edge, and that they can deter any potential future attacks, but what I’m willing to do is to make the kinds of commitments that would give everybody in the neighborhood, including Iran, a clarity that if Israel were to be attacked by any state, that we would stand by

them. And that, I think, should be . . . sufficient to take advantage of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see whether or not we can at least take the nuclear issue off the table.”

He added: “What I would say to the Israeli people is . . . that there is no formula, there is no option, to prevent Iran from getting a nuclear weapon that will be more effective than the diplomatic initiative and framework that we put forward—and that’s demonstrable.”

The president gave voice, though—in a more emotional and personal way than I’ve ever heard—to his distress at being depicted in Israel and among American Jews as somehow anti-Israel, when his views on peace are shared by many center-left Israelis and his administration has been acknowledged by Israeli officials to have been as vigorous as any in maintaining Israel’s strategic edge.

With huge amounts of conservative campaign money now flowing to candidates espousing pro-Israel views, which party is more supportive of Israel is becoming a wedge issue, an arms race, with Republican candidates competing over who can be the most unreservedly supportive of Israel in any disagreement with the United States, and ordinary, pro-Israel Democrats increasingly feeling sidelined.

### ***What Obama Would Say to Israelis***

President Obama explains why the nuclear deal is the best, and only, option to keep Israel safe from Iran.

“This is an area that I’ve been concerned about,” the president said. “Look, Israel is a robust, rowdy democracy. . . . We share so much. We share blood, family. . . . And part of what has always made the U.S.-Israeli relationship so special is that it has transcended party, and I think that has to be preserved. There has to be the ability for me to disagree with a policy on settlements, for example, without being viewed as . . . opposing Israel. There has to be a way for Prime Minister Netanyahu to disagree with me on policy without being viewed as anti-Democrat, and I think the right way to do it is to recognize that as many commonalities as we have, there are going to be strategic differences. And I think that it is important for each side to respect the debate that takes place in the other country and not try to work just with one side. . . . But this has been as hard as anything I do because of the deep affinities that I feel for the Israeli people and for the Jewish people. It’s been a hard period.”

You take it personally? I asked.

“It has been personally difficult for me to hear . . . expressions that somehow . . . this administration has not done everything it could to look out for Israel’s interest—and the suggestion that when we have very serious policy differences, that that’s not in the context of a deep and abiding friendship and concern and understanding of the threats that the Jewish people have faced historically and continue to face.” [ . . . ]

On Congress’s role, Obama said he insists on preserving the presidential prerogative to enter into binding agreements with foreign powers without congressional approval. However, he added, “I do think that [Tennessee Republican] Senator Corker, the head of the Foreign Relations Committee, is somebody who is sincerely concerned about this issue and is a good and decent man, and my hope is that we can find something that allows Congress to express itself but does not encroach on traditional presidential prerogatives—and ensures that, if in fact we get a good deal, that we can go ahead and implement it.”

Since President Obama has had more direct and indirect dealings with Iran's leadership—including an exchange of numerous letters with Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei—than any of his predecessors since Iran's revolution in 1979, I asked what he has learned from the back and forth.

"I think that it's important to recognize that Iran is a complicated country—just like we're a complicated country," the president said. "There is no doubt that, given the history between our two countries, that there is deep mistrust that is not going to fade away immediately. The activities that they engage in, the rhetoric, both anti-American, anti-Semitic, anti-Israel, is deeply disturbing. There are deep trends in the country that are contrary to not only our own national security interests and views but those of our allies and friends in the region, and those divisions are real."

But, he added, "what we've also seen is that there is a practical streak to the Iranian regime. I think they are concerned about self-preservation. I think they are responsive, to some degree, to their publics. I think the election of [President Hassan] Rouhani indicated that there was an appetite among the Iranian people for a rejoining with the international community, an emphasis on the economics and the desire to link up with a global economy. And so what we've seen over the last several years, I think, is the opportunity for those forces within Iran that want to break out of the rigid framework that they have been in for a long time to move in a different direction. It's not a radical break, but it's one that I think offers us the chance for a different type of relationship, and this nuclear deal, I think, is a potential expression of that."

What about Iran's supreme leader, who will be the ultimate decider there on whether or not Iran moves ahead? What have you learned about him? [. . .]

"He's a pretty tough read," the president said. "I haven't spoken to him directly. In the letters that he sends, there [are] typically a lot of reminders of what he perceives as past grievances against Iran, but what is, I think, telling is that he did give his negotiators in this deal the leeway, the capability to make important concessions, that would allow this framework agreement to come to fruition. So what that tells me is that—although he is deeply suspicious of the West [and] very insular in how he thinks about international issues as well as domestic issues, and deeply conservative—he does realize that the sanctions regime that we put together was weakening Iran over the long term, and that if in fact he wanted to see Iran re-enter the community of nations, then there were going to have to be changes."

Since he has acknowledged Israel's concerns, and the fact that they are widely shared there, if the president had a chance to make his case for this framework deal directly to the Israeli people, what would he say?

"Well, what I'd say to them is this," the president answered. "You have every right to be concerned about Iran. This is a regime that at the highest levels has expressed the desire to destroy Israel, that has denied the Holocaust, that has expressed venomous anti-Semitic ideas and is a big country with a big population and has a sophisticated military. So Israel is right to be concerned about Iran, and they should be absolutely concerned that Iran doesn't get a nuclear weapon." But, he insisted, this framework initiative, if it can be implemented, can satisfy that Israeli strategic concern with more effectiveness and at less cost to Israel than any other approach. "We know that a military strike or a series of military strikes can set back Iran's nuclear program

for a period of time—but almost certainly will prompt Iran to rush towards a bomb, will provide an excuse for hard-liners inside of Iran to say, “This is what happens when you don’t have a nuclear weapon: America attacks.”

“We know that if we do nothing, other than just maintain sanctions, that they will continue with the building of their nuclear infrastructure and we’ll have less insight into what exactly is happening,” Obama added. “So this may not be optimal. In a perfect world, Iran would say, ‘We won’t have any nuclear infrastructure at all,’ but what we know is that this has become a matter of pride and nationalism for Iran. Even those who we consider moderates and reformers are supportive of some nuclear program inside of Iran, and given that they will not capitulate completely, given that they can’t meet the threshold that Prime Minister Netanyahu sets forth, there are no Iranian leaders who will do that. And given the fact that this is a country that withstood an eight-year war and a million people dead, they’ve shown themselves willing, I think, to endure hardship when they considered a point of national pride or, in some cases, national survival.”

The president continued: “For us to examine those options and say to ourselves, ‘You know what, if we can have vigorous inspections, unprecedented, and we know at every point along their nuclear chain exactly what they’re doing and that lasts for 20 years, and for the first 10 years their program is not just frozen but effectively rolled back to a larger degree, and we know that even if they wanted to cheat we would have at least a year, which is about three times longer than we’d have right now, and we would have insights into their programs that we’ve never had before,’ in that circumstance, the notion that we wouldn’t take that deal right now and that that would not be in Israel’s interest is simply incorrect.”

Because, Obama argued, “the one thing that changes the equation is when these countries get a nuclear weapon. [ . . . ] Witness North Korea, which is a problem state that is rendered a lot more dangerous because of their nuclear program. If we can prevent that from happening anywhere else in the world, that’s something where it’s worth taking some risks.”

“I have to respect the fears that the Israeli people have,” he added, “and I understand that Prime Minister Netanyahu is expressing the deep-rooted concerns that a lot of the Israeli population feel about this, but what I can say to them is: Number one, this is our best bet by far to make sure Iran doesn’t get a nuclear weapon, and number two, what we will be doing even as we enter into this deal is sending a very clear message to the Iranians and to the entire region that if anybody messes with Israel, America will be there. And I think the combination of a diplomatic path that puts the nuclear issue to one side—while at the same time sending a clear message to the Iranians that you have to change your behavior more broadly and that we are going to protect our allies if you continue to engage in destabilizing aggressive activity—I think that’s a combination that potentially at least not only assures our friends, but starts bringing down the temperature.”

### ***Lessons from the Negotiations***

President Obama on the complexity and “practical streak” of the Iranian regime. [ . . . ]

If their leaders really are telling the truth that Iran is not seeking a nuclear weapon, the president said, then “the notion that they would want to expend so much on a symbolic program as opposed to harnessing the incredible talents and ingenuity and entrepreneurship of the Iranian people, and be part

of the world economy and see their nation excel in those terms, that should be a pretty straightforward choice for them. Iran doesn't need nuclear weapons to be a powerhouse in the region. For that matter, what I'd say to the Iranian people is: You don't need to be anti-Semitic or anti-Israel or anti-Sunni to be a powerhouse in the region. I mean, the truth is, Iran has all these potential assets going for it where, if it was a responsible international player, if it did not engage in aggressive rhetoric against its neighbors, if it didn't express anti-Israeli and anti-Jewish sentiment, if it maintained a military that was sufficient to protect itself, but was not engaging in a whole bunch of proxy wars around the region, by virtue of its size, its resources and its people it would be an extremely successful regional power. And so my hope is that the Iranian people begin to recognize that." [ . . . ]

### ***Israel and United States Congress***

President Obama on the breakdown of bipartisan debate over Israel and his personal affinity with the Israeli people.

"It is a good deal even if Iran doesn't change at all," Obama argued. "Even for somebody who believes, as I suspect Prime Minister Netanyahu believes, that there is no difference between Rouhani and the supreme leader and they're all adamantly anti-West and anti-Israel and perennial liars and cheaters—even if you believed all that, this still would be the right thing to do. It would still be the best option for us to protect ourselves. In fact, you could argue that if they are implacably opposed to us, all the more reason for us to want to have a deal in which we know what they're doing and that, for a long period of time, we can prevent them from having a nuclear weapon."

There are several very sensitive points in the framework agreement that are not clear to me, and I asked the president for his interpretation. For instance, if we suspect that Iran is cheating, is harboring a covert nuclear program outside of the declared nuclear facilities covered in this deal—say, at a military base in southeastern Iran—do we have the right to insist on that facility being examined by international inspectors?

"In the first instance, what we have agreed to is that we will be able to inspect and verify what's happening along the entire nuclear chain from the uranium mines all the way through to the final facilities like Natanz," the president said. "What that means is that we're not just going to have a bunch of folks posted at two or three or five sites. We are going to be able to see what they're doing across the board, and in fact, if they now wanted to initiate a covert program that was designed to produce a nuclear weapon, they'd have to create a whole different supply chain. That's point number one. Point number two, we're actually going to be setting up a procurement committee that examines what they're importing, what they're bringing in that they might claim as dual-use, to determine whether or not what they're using is something that would be appropriate for a peaceful nuclear program versus a weapons program. And number three, what we're going to be doing is setting up a mechanism whereby, yes, I.A.E.A. [International Atomic Energy Agency] inspectors can go anywhere."

Anywhere in Iran? I asked.

"That we suspect," the president answered. "Obviously, a request will have to be made. Iran could object, but what we have done is to try to design a mechanism whereby once those objections are heard, that it is not a final veto that Iran has, but in fact some sort of international mechanism will be in place that makes a fair assessment as to whether there should be an inspection, and if they determine it should be, that's the tiebreaker, not Iran saying, 'No, you can't come here.' So

over all, what we're seeing is not just the additional protocols that I.A.E.A. has imposed on countries that are suspected of in the past having had problematic nuclear programs, we're going even beyond that, and Iran will be subject to the kinds of inspections and verification mechanisms that have never been put in place before."

A lot of people, myself included, will want to see the fine print on that. Another issue that doesn't seem to have been resolved yet is: When exactly do the economic sanctions on Iran get lifted? When the implementation begins? When Iran has been deemed to be complying fully?

"There are still details to be worked out," the president said, "but I think that the basic framework calls for Iran to take the steps that it needs to around [the Fordow enrichment facility], the centrifuges, and so forth. At that point, then, the U.N. sanctions are suspended; although the sanctions related to proliferation, the sanctions related to ballistic missiles, there's a set of sanctions that remain in place. At that point, then, we preserve the ability to snap back those sanctions, if there is a violation. If not, though, Iran, outside of the proliferation and ballistic missile issues that stay in place, they're able to get out from under the sanctions, understanding that this constant monitoring will potentially trigger some sort of action if they're in violation."

There are still United States sanctions that are related to Iran's behavior in terrorism and human rights abuse, though, the president added: "There are certain sanctions that we have that would remain in place because they're not related to Iran's nuclear program, and this, I think, gets to a central point that we've made consistently. If in fact we are able to finalize the nuclear deal, and if Iran abides by it, that's a big piece of business that we've gotten done, but it does not end our problems with Iran, and we are still going to be aggressively working with our allies and friends to reduce—and hopefully at some point stop—the destabilizing activities that Iran has engaged in, the sponsorship of terrorist organizations. And that may take some time. But it's our belief, it's my belief, that we will be in a stronger position to do so if the nuclear issue has been put in a box. And if we can do that, it's possible that Iran, seeing the benefits of sanctions relief, starts focusing more on the economy and its people. And investment starts coming in, and the country starts opening up. If we've done a good job in bolstering the sense of security and defense cooperation between us and the Sunni states, if we have made even more certain that the Israeli people are absolutely protected not just by their own capacities, but also by our commitments, then what's possible is you start seeing an equilibrium in the region, and Sunni and Shia, Saudi and Iran start saying, 'Maybe we should lower tensions and focus on the extremists like [ISIS] that would burn down this entire region if they could.'" [ . . . ]

### ***Congress's "Red Line"***

President Obama on the "dangers" that arise when lawmakers breach traditional channels of foreign policy.

It feels lately like some traditional boundaries between the executive and legislative branches, when it comes to the conduct of American foreign policy, have been breached. For instance, there was the letter from 47 Republican senators to Iran's supreme leader cautioning him on striking any deal with Obama not endorsed by them—coming in the wake of Prime Minister Netanyahu being invited by the speaker of the House, John Boehner, to address a joint session of Congress—without consulting the White House. How is Obama taking this?

“I do worry that some traditional boundaries in how we think about foreign policy have been crossed,” the president said. “I felt the letter that was sent to the supreme leader was inappropriate. I think that you will recall there were some deep disagreements with President Bush about the Iraq war, but the notion that you would have had a whole bunch of Democrats sending letters to leaders in the region or to European leaders [ . . . ] trying to undermine the president’s policies I think is troubling.

“The bottom line,” he added, “is that we’re going to have serious debates, serious disagreements, and I welcome those because that’s how our democracy is supposed to work, and in today’s international environment, whatever arguments we have here, other people are hearing and reading about it. It’s not a secret that the Republicans may feel more affinity with Prime Minister Netanyahu’s views of the Iran issue than they do with mine. But [we need to be] keeping that within some formal boundaries, so that the executive branch, when it goes overseas, when it’s communicating with foreign leaders, is understood to be speaking on behalf of the United States of America, not a divided United States of America, making sure that whether that president is a Democrat or a Republican that once the debates have been had here, that he or she is the spokesperson on behalf of U.S. foreign policy. And that’s clear to every leader around the world. That’s important because without that, what you start getting is multiple foreign policies, confusion among foreign powers as to who speaks for who, and that ends up being a very dangerous—circumstances that could be exploited by our enemies and could deeply disturb our friends.”

As for the Obama doctrine—“we will engage, but we preserve all our capabilities”—the president concluded: “I’ve been very clear that Iran will not get a nuclear weapon on my watch, and I think they should understand that we mean it. But I say that hoping that we can conclude this diplomatic arrangement—and that it ushers a new era in U.S.-Iranian relations—and, just as importantly, over time, a new era in Iranian relations with its neighbors.”

Whatever happened in the past, he said, “at this point, the U.S.’s core interests in the region are not oil, are not territorial. . . . Our core interests are that everybody is living in peace, that it is orderly, that our allies are not being attacked, that children are not having barrel bombs dropped on them, that massive displacements aren’t taking place. Our interests in this sense are really just making sure that the region is working. And if it’s working well, then we’ll do fine. And that’s going to be a big project, given what’s taken place, but I think this [Iran framework deal] is at least one place to start.”

**J. U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE JOHN KERRY, INTERVIEW WITH ISRAEL’S CHANNEL 10 NEWS REGARDING THE IRAN NUCLEAR PLAN, WASHINGTON, 30 APRIL 2015 (EXCERPTS)**

*On 30 April, just four weeks after the P5+1 and Iran reached a framework agreement on Iran’s nuclear program, U.S. secretary of state John Kerry was interviewed by Israel’s Channel 10 News. Conducted in Washington, DC, by Tamar Ish-Shalom, the interview focuses on how a deal with Iran would affect Israel as well as the increasingly tense relations between U.S. president Barack Obama and Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu. In the excerpts presented below, Kerry addresses Israel’s concerns and discusses the exceptional nature of the U.S. relationship with Israel. The full transcript can be found on the State Department’s website: [www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov).*

***Mr. Secretary, the U.S., Israel's obviously strongest ally, is advancing towards an agreement with Iran, a country that has publicly sworn to wipe my country off the map and a country that while negotiating with the West is still funding Hizballah and directing its actions. Can you understand why some Israelis feel deep disappointment towards the Administration?***

Well, I can understand why they feel a set of questions and skepticism. That I understand. But I don't think it's appropriate to feel disappointment because we're not going to disappoint Israel. We will never disappoint Israel. We are not going to sign a deal—I'll say this again—we will not sign a deal that does not close off Iran's pathways to a bomb and that doesn't give us the confidence to all of our experts—in fact, to global experts—that we will be able to know what Iran is doing and prevent them from getting a nuclear weapon. [. . .]

***President Obama said to Israelis, "We have your back." What does that practically mean? What kind of assurances will Israel receive?***

Well, let me give you an example of what that means. A lot of Israelis don't see this, but every week we step up to defend Israel in one fora or another in the world, whether it's the Human Rights Council in Geneva, whether it's the UN in New York, whether it's some other entity in The Hague, at the ICC, whatever it is. We constantly are voting, working, pushing in order to push back against unfair bias, bigoted, degrading, inappropriate assaults on Israel's sovereignty and integrity, and we stand up for it.

***And that, of course—***

In fact, we're even being kicked out of entities at the UN now because we stand up and we have a law that says if the Palestinians do something, then we would not pay our dues. Well, guess what? Because of that we're losing our vote in UNESCO. We will—and we will no longer, by the way, be able to defend Israel as a result of losing that vote. So we believe and we've asked the prime minister and the Government of Israel, give us a waiver so we can at least continue to be able to defend Israel, because actually this winds up being self-defeating.

***Did you receive an answer on this?***

We haven't yet gotten the support we're looking for to try to be able to get that waiver. So really, I think it hurts Israel because we're no longer able to be there. I mean, we've done so many things, including trying to prevent the Palestinians from going to the ICC, trying to argue at the ICC that they're not a state, and that costs us, believe me, in certain ways. But we do it because it's the right thing to do and we stand with Israel. So I think people need to have some confidence that the administration that designed and deployed Iron Dome that has saved countless thousands of lives in Israel, the administration that has signed an MOU [memorandum of understanding] and put \$3.1 billion on the table to continue to provide defense, that supported Israel through Gaza and so forth, the administration that designed and deployed a weapon that has the ability to deal with Iran's nuclear program is absolutely an administration, a government, and a country that will stand by Israel way into the future. [. . .]



***Mr. Secretary, when Prime Minister Netanyahu was asked if he trusts President Obama in an interview to CNN recently, he chose to evade an answer again and again. Isn't this maybe more than anything evidence to the low point the relationship has come to that leaders on both sides can't even publicly declare that they trust one another?***

Well, I don't—I didn't see the interview. I don't know what he said or didn't say, so I'm not going to comment on that except to say to you that I don't think—I was in the United States Senate for 29 years, left in my 29th. I had a 100 percent voting record for Israel. I have great ties to Israel. And I can tell you, no administration in American history has literally done as much, put as much on the line, worked as hard to try to help Israel in so many ways, from trying to work with the Palestinians on peace efforts a year and a half ago to building Iron Dome, deploying it; to providing the MOU; to providing daily work with our intelligence community, with our military that is still going on notwithstanding any tensions or misunderstandings. President Obama wants a strong and normal relationship with the government, with the prime minister, with whatever emerges as a government. We look forward to working with it. I look forward to traveling there and visiting. It was going to happen sooner; it may happen now in the next weeks when they get a government. And I'm confident we're going to proceed forward with a strong and healthy relationship between the United States and Israel because that's in our DNA. It's not going away. [. . .]