

June 29, 2017

UNITED, BIPARTISAN STATEMENT FROM AMERICAN DELEGATION

With a long bipartisan history of serving the American people, we stand together today to express our views regarding United States policy on Iran and the Middle East. We do so in solidarity with thousands of Iranians gathered in Paris on July 1, 2017 for the annual rally of the Iranian opposition.

The Iranian regime bears historic responsibility for the instability and crisis in the region today. The regime has preserved its grip on power for 38 years due to widespread repression and blatant disregard for human rights at home and the export of extremism and terrorism abroad. The hope of some Western governments was that time would lead to moderation by the Mullahs or to the emergence of a reformist faction that could challenge the dominance of the clerical regime. The reality has been far different.

Tehran has been responsible for a series of deadly terrorist attacks against the United States. These include the 1983 bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut killing 241 along with bombings of the US Embassy and later the Embassy Annex, the Khobar Tower bombing in Saudi Arabia in 1996 killing 19 US Airmen, and, more recently, aiding and abetting the deaths of hundreds of American soldiers in Iraq.

The Iran-fueled sectarian division of Iraq laid the foundation for the creation of ISIS. Direct Iranian armed intervention in Syria bears the prime responsibility for blocking the UN's political transition process that might have halted the carnage in Syria led by Iran's ally Bashar al Assad. Iran today commands and funds upwards of 150,000 IRGC, Shia militia and mercenary armed fighters in Iraq and Syria, preventing both countries from achieving stability under legitimate constitutional government that respects the rights of all citizens. We agree with the apparent new US policy of ending the previous United States overture toward the Iranian regime while holding Iran to its nuclear commitments, and believe an approach based on the historic experience and realities in the region is essential.

As part of a new approach every effort must be made to end the Iranian regime's meddling in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Lebanon and other countries of the region. The first step would be to demand that the IRGC halt its supply of weapons, explosives and cash to extremist militias and cease its illicit trafficking in drugs, underage girls and other such criminal and immoral activities. IRGC business entities whose profits fund its destabilizing interventions and illicit activities should be sanctioned along with key operatives.

We believe the correct, and inevitable, outcome of the crisis in the region is popular sovereignty exercised by the Iranian people, wherein they may freely choose new, legitimate and principled leadership. Four years of experience with President Hassan Rouhani has established that this regime is incapable of fundamental change or moderation. He did not keep his 2013 campaign promises, and has presided over the execution of more than 3,000 people in four years. His Justice Minister is guilty of a crime against humanity – directly authorizing the mass executions

of 30,000 prisoners in August-September 1988. His Defense Minister oversaw the creation of Hizballah in Lebanon and directed the 1983 bombing of the US Marine Barracks at Beirut Airport. Our colleagues in Washington, and the American media, must stop referring to such people as reformers or moderates. The Iranian people have every right to demand an end to the clerical dictatorship, and take responsibility for their own governance.

The Tehran regime is uniquely vulnerable. The infrastructure of the economy has been neglected for decades, and most of the private sector has been taken over by religious foundations and military holding companies. There is a fierce power struggle within the regime resulting from the failure to address the most basic problems confronting the country. Mounting popular discontent has increasingly become visible in public, reflecting social and political pressures for more personal freedom, economic relief, and accountability for the mass executions of political opponents, including the 1988 massacre of 30,000 political prisoners with a majority of them from the Mujahedin-e Khalq (MEK). Statements within the clerical regime make clear that these public signs of disaffection are a paramount concern.

We believe that change is within reach, not only because the regime is becoming engulfed in crisis, but also because there is a large and growing movement organizing for positive change. A viable organization capable of ending the nightmare of religious dictatorship by establishing freedom and democracy, tolerance, and gender equality has steadily gained visibility, popular support and international recognition. Under the leadership of Maryam Rajavi, a Muslim woman standing for gender equality, which is an antidote to Islamic fundamentalism and extremism, it is working every day to bring about a tolerant, non-nuclear Iranian republic based on separation of religion and state, that will uphold the rights of all.

The National Council of Resistance of Iran, pursuing its long journey that began more than a half-century ago, has the vision, leadership and courage to lead the way to the creation of a new Iran. The obligation to stand up to this corrupt and illegitimate regime and say “no more” rests with the Iranian people alone, but the international community must meet its responsibility by condemning the Mullahs’ oppression and embracing the Iranian people’s aspirations for a free and prosperous Iran accepted and respected around the world. Today, we join with the Iranian people and colleagues from many other countries in pledging our support to this great cause.

Amb. J. Kenneth Blackwell – Former U.S. Representative, United Nations Human Rights Commission

Hon. Lincoln P. Bloomfield, Jr.,
Former Special Envoy and Asst Sec State

Hon. John Bolton- Former UN Ambassador

Colonel (Ret.) Thomas V. Cantwell - Former US Military Commander for Camp Ashraf

General George Casey - Former U.S. Army Chief of Staff and Commander of Multi-National Forces - Iraq

Linda Chavez -Former Assistant to the President For Public Liaison; Chairman of the Center for Equal Opportunity

Gen. (Ret.) James Conway – Former Commandant U.S. Marine Corps

Lt. Gen. (Ret.) David Deptula – Former Deputy COS For Intel, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance, U.S. Air Force

Professor Alan Dershowitz - Professor of Law, Harvard Law School

Hon. Louis J. Freeh – Former Director FBI

Hon. Newt Gingrich - Former Speaker of the House

Hon. Marc Ginsberg - Former U.S. Ambassador to Morocco

Hon. Rudy Giuliani - Former NYC Mayor, Presidential Candidate

General (Ret.) *James L. Jones* - Former USMC Commandant, NATO Commander, National Security Advisor to the President

Hon. Robert Joseph
Former Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security

Hon. Patrick Kennedy – Former Rhode Island Congressman

Hon. Joseph I. Lieberman – Former Connecticut Senator

Colonel (Ret.), U.S. Army Wesley M. Martin – Former US Military Commander for Camp Ashraf

Hon. R. Bruce McColm - President, Institute for Democratic Strategies

Colonel (Ret.) Gary Morsch, Former Senior Medical Officer at Ashraf

Hon. Michael B. Mukasey - Former US Attorney General

Brig. Gen. (Ret.) David D. Phillips – Former US Military Commander For Camp Ashraf

Hon. Mitchell B. Reiss (Ret.) - Former Ambassador, Former Special Envoy to the Northern Ireland Peace Process

Hon. Edward Rendell - Former PA Governor, DNC Chairman

Hon. Tom Ridge – Former PA Governor, Secretary Homeland Security

Hon. John Sano - Former Deputy Director CIA National Clandestine Service

Hon. Eugene R. Sullivan – Retired Federal Judge

Hon. Raymond Tanter - Former Personal Representative of Secretary of Defense to Arms Control Negotiations

Hon. Robert Torricelli - Former NJ Senator