



Act on Iran. Now!

by Hedayat Mostowfi
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The West must refer Iran's nuclear dossier to the United Nations Security Council for the adoption of sanctions in order to thwart its nuclear ambitions.



Mohammed Khatami, the so-called reformist and pro-Western Iranian president, announced last week that the Islamic Republic will continue enriching uranium in defiance of a resolution adopted by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) that demanded Iran stop all nuclear-related activity. Once again, the international community has failed to convince mullahs to curb their nuclear procurement through dialogue. Meanwhile Iran has gained valuable time to continue its efforts to obtain the A-bomb.

This must be a big blow for the policy makers who are in the favor of a "Grand Bargain" strategy and who have been aimlessly prescribing engagement and dialogue with the tyranny in Iran for more than twenty-five years. In fact, those European countries and those in the United States who endorse the appeasement policy are partially responsible for the catastrophic outcomes of giving the mullahs of Iran time to work toward the realization of their dangerous ambitions.

Iran has been the major sponsor of global terrorism for a quarter century. From sponsoring terrorist groups in the Middle East to bombings of Khobar and Buenos Aires and fueling the insurgency in Iraq, it is not difficult to imagine how Iran would use or distribute its nuclear weapons. It is a mystery that while countries with much lower risks to world stability have been confronted, the mullahs in Iran have been spared.

The Iranian leaders have used a variety of tactics to circumvent decisive international action. They use the insurgency in Iraq to weaken the coalition forces and to divert attention from their plans. They offer lucrative trade contracts to their European partners in return for political concessions. They use everything in their power

to silence dissent at home and abroad. Inside Iran, they use executions, inhumane punishments and severe abuse of human rights. Abroad, they have so far killed 450 exiles. After the European Union began engaging Iran under the cloak of "critical dialogue," the mullahs demanded the blacklisting of Iran's main opposition group, the People's Mujahedeen of Iran (MEK), effectively restricting the activities of their opponents outside the country. Ironically, the MEK and its affiliated organizations were the key source of information that shed bright lights on Iran's clandestine nuclear weapons program two years ago.

Today's chaos in Iraq and elsewhere in the Middle East could be explained in the context of a policy of mollifying the mullahs in Tehran, who have realized that either for pure economic reasons or political considerations, the West is willing to turn a blind eye on their excesses at home and sponsorship of terror abroad.

The world has always limited itself to two options when considering what to do about the Iranian danger: appeasement or military action. Both are misguided. The former has proven futile in the past decade and the latter ignores the role the Iranian people and the organized opposition could play in bringing about regime change in that country.

The fact is that Iran is perhaps the only country in the world today where the overwhelming majority of its citizens (ninety-four percent according to a government poll two years ago) oppose the clerics. This explains why tens of thousands of Iranians have been imprisoned, tortured or executed by the current government. Unfortunately, Europe's policy of all carrot and no stick has impeded efforts by Iranians and dissident forces to unseat the regime in Tehran.

If the West is seriously concerned about Iran's mischief in Iraq, nuclear intransigence, and sponsorship of terror, it has no choice but to reach out to Iranian opposition groups who are seeking to replace the current regime with the secular, democratic government. As a first step, Europe and the U.S. should remove the MEK from their list of terrorist Organizations. The group's designation several years ago was politically motivated and designed to placate the Iranian theocracy.

Parallel to working with Iranian dissident groups, the West must refer Iran's nuclear dossier to the United Nations Security Council

for the adoption of sanctions in order to thwart its nuclear ambitions.

These initiatives would weaken the Iranian regime from inside and outside and give the Iranian people the hope and power to topple the mullahs. The world would be a better and safer place without the turbaned tyrants in Iran. The clock is ticking for Iran and our indecisiveness is the key to achieve nuclear weapons. Act firmly on Iran, now!

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