

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 21, 2015

The Honorable John Kerry
United States Secretary of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington D.C., 20520

Dear Secretary Kerry,

We write to express our concern over recent media reports that Russia may again be considering supplying five S300 advanced air defense systems to Iran. This unwelcome news of the potential sale comes as Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu concludes a visit to Tehran where he and Iranian Defense Minister Brigadier General Hossein Dehqan reportedly signed an agreement to boost defense cooperation between Russia and Iran.

We first wrote to you to express similar concern in September 2013, after reports surfaced that Russia was considering the sale of the S300 systems. As you know, the initial contract for the sale was canceled in 2010 following intense international pressure and the passage of United Nations Security Council resolution 1929 which called upon all states to exercise vigilance and restraint over the supply, sale, transfer, provision, manufacture and use of all arms and related material to Iran.

Mr. Secretary, we also believe that the potential sale of the S300 defense system will jeopardize prospects for resolving the Iranian nuclear issue through diplomacy. While we understand that Russia's role in ongoing P5+1 talks is critical, we urge you to send a clear message to Russia that moving forward with this sale would undermine negotiations and severely threaten regional stability and U.S. national security.

As we mentioned in our previous letter, maintaining a credible military threat should diplomacy fail has always been a vital component of the United States' policy toward Iran. We remain concerned that the S300 systems would significantly expand Iran's defense capabilities, potentially emboldening Supreme Leader Khamenei's pursuit of nuclear weapons.

We appreciate your previous efforts to ensure such a sale would not move forward, and we ask that you remain resolute in your commitment to preventing the transfer of destabilizing weapons systems to Iran.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Respectfully,



Ted Deutch
Member of Congress



Peter Roskam
Member of Congress