



CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20318-9999

15 December 2016

The Honorable Ted Cruz
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Cruz:

Thank you for your letter cosigned by 17 other U.S. Senators regarding the Hague Tribunal settlement payment of \$1.7 billion to the Islamic Republic of Iran by the United States. Below are my individual answers to the six questions in your initial letter. I would also be glad to have my staff provide more detail in a classified setting.

1. Is it the Department of Defense's assessment that the \$1.7 billion in cash the administration provided to Iran has been primarily devoted to Iran's military budget?

Intelligence assesses that the \$1.7 billion transferred to Iran probably was allocated predominantly to Iran's economic sector, in accordance with Tehran's stated emphasis on economic expansion, modernization, and diversification.

2. How does the Department of Defense assess that Iran will spend these additional military resources?

Iran continues to seek improved missile systems and the replacement of aging military equipment, particularly aircraft and naval vessels. However, there is a lack of information to suggest Iran is attempting to use the \$1.7 billion toward these interests.

3. What are the tactical, operational, or strategic implications for the United States of these additional resources, and how does the Department of Defense plan to respond?

This specific transfer of money has not forced me to reconsider or change the advice I provide to the President or guidance I deliver to the Combatant Commands.

4. Have any of the United States' Middle East regional partners expressed concern to you regarding Iran's increasing belligerence, as well as Tehran's growing military investment?

Regional actors have expressed great concern about Iran's activities and intent, but I have not received new, specific concerns regarding an increasing belligerence or growing military investment on the part of Iran.

5. Do you see a correlation between the increased financial resources now available to Iran and the increase in its belligerent activities?

While Iran seeks to project an image of increasing strength in the region, its malign activities remain within historic norms. There is a lack of information to suggest any change in


the overall level of Iran's belligerent activities is directly correlated with an increase in available financial resources.

6. When decisions of this nature are made in the future do you think it would be helpful for other entities of the executive branch, including the White House and National Security Council, to consult the Department of Defense beforehand?

I have consistently provided military advice to the National Security Council and its members, and will continue to provide the President and the National Security Council with my best military advice on the range of issues affecting our national security.

I appreciate your continued support for our men and women in uniform. I am sending an identical letter to the other signatories of your letter.

Sincerely,



JOSEPH F. DUNFORD, JR.
General, U.S. Marine Corps