



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

APR 27 2016

The Honorable  
Mike Pompeo  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Pompeo:

Thank you for your letter of March 31 regarding Iran's ballistic missile activities. We have long been concerned about Iran's ballistic missile program. Iran's efforts to develop increasingly capable ballistic missile systems remain one of our most significant nonproliferation challenges and a very real threat to regional and international security. We continue to aggressively deploy a range of multilateral and unilateral tools to address Iran's ballistic missile development efforts.

UNSC resolution 2231 (2015), whose relevant provisions came into effect on January 16 of this year, calls upon Iran not to undertake any launches of ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering a nuclear weapon. We regard Iran's March ballistic missile launches to be clearly covered by this provision. On March 11, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Samantha Power made a public statement raising concerns about Iran's missile launches, calling them provocative and destabilizing and pledging follow-up in the Security Council. At U.S. request, we discussed the launches in the Security Council on March 14. Along with France, Germany and the UK, we also submitted a report on these launches to the Security Council, which asked for a meeting of the Security Council in its UNSC resolution 2231 experts format to consider an appropriate response. We used the April 1 experts format meeting to underscore our concerns about these launches in defiance of UNSC resolution 2231. We rejected the notion that it is in any way excusable for Iran – or any other country – to behave contrary to the clear and unanimous expression of the Security Council's will. We sent U.S. missile experts to New York to brief on the launches at this meeting to make clear to our Council partners that the launches were inconsistent with the resolution and needed a Security Council response. We have asked the UN Secretary-General to report on any actions by Iran that are inconsistent with UNSC resolution 2231 in biannual reports due to the Security Council.

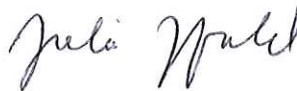
As was the case under UN Security Council resolution 1929 (2010), when Iran outright refused to comply with the Security Council's requirement that it not undertake launches related to "ballistic missiles capable of delivering nuclear weapons" and repeatedly launched ballistic missiles, further action in the Security Council can be blocked by other permanent members of the Council. This has not, however, undermined our resolve to use the UN Security Council to shine a spotlight on Iran's destabilizing activities in the region, including ballistic missile launches. We will continue to use the Security Council to discuss such missile launches and increase the political costs to Iran of its behavior.

We must also work with like-minded partners outside the UN context to ensure an adequate response. We are committed to continuing to use domestic U.S. sanctions as a tool to address concerns about Iran's ballistic missile program. On March 24, we designated two Iran-based entities directly involved with Iran's ballistic missile program. These sanctions follow our action on January 17, 2016, when we designated three entities and eight individuals involved in a network that procured materials and equipment for Iran's ballistic missile program.

Moreover, the UNSC prohibitions on Iran's access to missile technology and expertise are the most important and effective restrictions on Iran's missile program, and they remain in full effect. UN Security Council resolution 2231 maintains all legally binding requirements on states to deny Iran access to missile technology and expertise, and the international community continues to rely on these provisions to limit Iran's missile program. We will also continue working with international and regional partners to bolster ballistic missile defenses and interdict transfers of prohibited ballistic missile technology to Iran.

We hope this information is useful. We remain committed to continuing our close consultations with Congress on Iran. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of further assistance on this or any other matter.

Sincerely,



Julia Frifield  
Assistant Secretary  
Legislative Affairs