

הבית הירוק הביטחוני סטימס IDSF

ISRAEL'S DEFENSE & SECURITY FORUM

The Honorable Robert Menendez
United States Senate
528 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

December 9, 2021

Dear Chairman Menendez,

Israel's Defense and Security Forum (IDSF) consists of 2,900 veteran senior officers, commanders, and soldiers from the Israeli military, intelligence and law enforcement who are committed to ensuring Israel's national security.

In our assessment, the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), is fatally flawed and represents a significant threat to Israel's security. Returning to this expired and flawed agreement would be a grave mistake.

While the Iranian government continues threaten Israel with destruction, flagrantly violating the UN charter, negotiations are reportedly underway to achieve a weaker or 'less for more' deal that would involve fewer restrictions on Iran's nuclear program in exchange for more sanctions relief. Such an agreement would fuel Iran's already recovering economy and leave Israel in an unacceptably precarious situation. It would remove necessary pressure from the clerical regime and grant it valuable time to increase its resilience against future American economic pressure, continue skirting international inspections and oversight into their undeclared nuclear activities, and provide patient pathways to nuclear weapons and the missiles to deliver them. The goal: a "nuclear umbrella" under which Tehran can dominate the region.

Preventing Iran from obtaining deliverable nuclear weapons while addressing other key malign activities by the Iranian regime is possible and critical. Negotiations to achieve a new agreement is preferable to other courses of action on the condition these talks follow the following guidelines:

1. Negotiating a new agreement with Iran should take place while the pressure is on

Full return of Iran and the U.S. to their commitments under the JCPOA is not desirable if it results in the lifting or suspension of sanctions before reaching a new agreement.

2. The time frame of the agreement

Any new deal should set a much longer and more binding timeframe than the one under the provisions of the JCPOA. It is important to avoid any "sunset" clauses under which limitations on Iran's nuclear capabilities expire over time.

3. The verification mechanism

The verifications as set in the JCPOA only refer to specific sites declared by Iran. Considering the Iranian regime's past record in repeatedly violating their international obligations under the Non-

Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) statute, as well as the JCPOA, a new agreement should include a much more comprehensive verification and supervision mechanism, including the ability to conduct inspections anywhere and anytime, a full resolution of the IAEA's outstanding questions about undeclared nuclear materials, sites and activities, and the monitoring and questioning of scientists related to the Iranian nuclear program.

4. The ballistic missiles program

There should be a prohibition over Iranian development of ballistic and cruise missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads.

5. The Snapback

If the JCPOA is dead, the sunset provisions of UNSCR 2231 should be removed as well. That requires the immediate snapback of the resolution to reimpose all international restrictions on Iran. At present, the snapback provision of UNSCR 2231 expires in 2025. Snapback is vital to reset the table for any new agreement. The U.S. should maintain its right to use a snapback mechanism in perpetuity if a new agreement is reached.

6. The Arms Embargo

Snapback of UNSCR 2231 would restore the UN arms embargo that expired in October 2020. Keeping this embargo in place should be a prerequisite for any future agreement.

7. Preservation of specific sanctions

The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, the Quds Force, the Iranian defense industries and its nuclear-related industries must remain under severe sanctions. All sanctions for terrorism, missile proliferation and human rights abuses must be maintained until there is demonstrable evidence that the malign activities underlying those sanctions has permanently ended. The Central Bank of Iran, the National Iranian Oil Company and many other banks and companies in Iran are currently subject to terrorism sanctions, not nuclear sanctions.

An agreement which incorporates the above elements would provide the international community with the tools necessary to effectively monitor the regime, while stabilizing the entire Middle East and strengthening Israel's security.

Sincerely,

Brigadier General (res) Amir Avivi
CEO IDSF

Major General (res) Yossi Bachar
Executive Board, IDSF

Major General (res) Gershon Hacohen
Executive Board IDSF

Brigadier General (res) Yossi Kuperwasser
Director of Research IDSF

CC: Ambassador Michael Herzog
Ambassador Tom Nides