

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4304

Committee on Armed Services

Military Personnel

Cyber, Innovative Technologies and
Information Systems

Committee on Oversight and Reform

Environment

November 8, 2022

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500-0005

Dear President Biden:

In Washington D.C. and in cities around the world, citizens are marching in solidarity with the people of Iran. In Tehran, Iranians are protesting Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's thuggish regime—a regime that continues to oppress the Iranian people and that continues to sow chaos globally. The death of Mahsa Amini has been a rallying cry for the Iranian diaspora and for freedom loving people everywhere. We see this regime for what it truly is—a mob of cowardly murderers who deserves neither grace nor tolerance by the civilized world. In stark contrast to the will of the Iranian people and the Iranian diaspora, your administration has yet to withdraw from Russian-brokered negotiations with Iran for the resumption of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) or a weaker framework agreement. The continued existence of Special Envoy for Iran Rob Malley's position and the open door of negotiations with this regime undermines the brave voices that are calling for freedom and democracy in Iran.

For over five weeks, the streets of Iran have echoed with the words "women, life, freedom." These brave voices have been met with violent reprisal. It is estimated that over 200 protesters have been killed by Iran's security forces and that over 12,500 protesters have been arrested.¹ Now more than ever, support for these protests is critical. Iranians are calling for clarity and decisiveness from you. What they have received has been far from clear and anything but decisive. In fact, what they have received are empty words and out of touch sentiment. On October 22nd, Special Envoy Rob Malley tweeted, "Marchers in Washington and cities around the world are showing their support for the Iranian people, who continue to peacefully demonstrate for their government to respect their dignity and human rights."² Iranian journalist and activist Masih Alinejad rightfully criticized this statement by saying, "His hurtful tweets reflect a total lack of empathy for Iranians. He has misrepresented Iran's uprising and seeks a nuclear deal with a regime that sends weapons

¹ Patrick Wintour, *Almost 12,500 people arrested in Iran protest crackdown, says rights group*, The Guardian, October 21, 2022.

² <https://twitter.com/USEnvoyIran/status/1583981630175469569>

to Putin.”³ This is the latest installment of your administration’s zero sum JCPOA, Iran appealing foreign policy.

A revival of the JCPOA or a lesser than agreement is antithetical to freedom. Reentering the JCPOA or a weaker framework agreement, would reward Iran with a pathway toward a nuclear weapon. Additionally, Iran would obtain the following: (1) sanctions relief in multiple economic sectors accounting for 20-25% of its GDP, (2) sanctions free access to approximately \$30 billion in annual export revenue, and (3) a little over \$7 billion of frozen funds tied to Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) financing.⁴ In total, this deal would give Tehran access to \$274 billion in its first year and at least \$1 trillion by 2030.⁵ This money would undoubtedly be used to support terrorism and regional destabilization, its missile program, and human rights abuses against the people of Iran. Around the world, we see the IRGC’s terrorism on full display.

In Ukraine and in Belarus, Iranian drones and missiles are being delivered to inflict pain and suffering on the Ukrainian people. Just recently it was reported that Iranian instructors from the IRGC were seen in Belarus and in Crimea training Russian troops and coordinating launches of Iranian-made drones. According to the Ukrainian National Resistance Center, “a group of Iranian instructors, officers of the IRGC, who are under the highest protection of the Russian National Guard and FSB (Federal Security Service) officers” was spotted in the village of Mykulichi, in the Gomel region.⁶ The White House confirmed that Iran supplied Russia with dozens of drones and has more shipments on the way — 2,400, according to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky — and has operators deployed with the Russian military in Crimea.⁷

But this isn’t the only instance of Iran’s terrorism. Through its proxies in Yemen, Lebanon, Iraq, Syria, Latin America, the West Bank and beyond, Iran continues to stoke the flames of conflict, death, and destruction. And even on American soil, they motivated the attempted assassination of British-American author Salman Rushdie, they tried to assassinate U.S. officials from the previous administration, and they have been implicated in the forced extradition plots of dissidents and critics. In spite of all of this, your administration decided to ignore this and grant Iranian dictator Ebrahim Raisi a visa to spew his hatred at the United Nations General Assembly. At nearly every turn, your administration, through Special Envoy Malley, has made every wrong decision imaginable—decisions that have emboldened the regime and that undermine Iran’s revolutionary movement.

Enough is enough. The leadership in Iran is beyond reform and deserves nothing from the civilized world. The United States must lead through action, not empty rhetoric. This requires the following actions from your administration:

³ <https://twitter.com/AlinejadMasih/status/1584740955835482113>

⁴ *Iran Deal May Provide Billions in IRGC-Connected Sanctions Relief Prior To Congressional Review*, Foundation for Defense of Democracies, September 2, 2022.

⁵ Saeed Ghasseminejad, *Tehran’s \$1 Trillion Deal: An Updated Forecast of Iran’s Financial Windfall From a New Nuclear Agreement*, Foundation for Defense of Democracies, August 29, 2022.

⁶ *Iranian instructors train Russian military in Belarus – report*, i24 News, October 24, 2022.

⁷ Katherine Zimmerman, *The Dangers of Iran’s Drones in Ukraine*, The Hill, October 31, 2022.

1. Remove Rob Malley as U.S. Special Envoy for Iran and permanently halt negotiations on a revival of the JCPOA or a lesser than agreement;
2. Work on a bilateral and multilateral basis to encourage political isolation of the regime;
3. Work with our allies to snapback lifted UN sanctions;
4. Strictly enforce existing sanctions that were loosened because of the negotiations (including Executive Order 13846, Executive Order 13871, and Executive Order 13902);
5. Ban the entry of Iranian human rights abusers and their associates into the United States;
6. Counter the regime's proxy forces that are supported and funded by the IRGC; and
7. Supply the Iranian people with secure internet access and supportive cyber capabilities.

Anything short of this is an abdication of the United States' responsibility as the leader of the free world. We implore you to do what is right. Walk away from the negotiating table and stand with the people of Iran.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pat Fallon', with a large, stylized flourish above the name.

Pat Fallon
Member of Congress

CC: Dr. Robert Malley
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The Honorable Jake Sullivan
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