

Statement by National Security Leaders on the Announcement of a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action

July 20, 2015

We applaud the announcement that a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) has been reached with Iran to limit its nuclear program. We congratulate President Obama and all the negotiators for a landmark agreement unprecedented in its importance for preventing the acquisition of nuclear weapons by Iran.

Though primarily a nonproliferation agreement, the JCPOA has significant implications for some of America's most important national objectives: regional stability in the Middle East, Israel's security, dealing with an untrustworthy and hostile nation, and U.S. leadership on major global challenges.

This JCPOA will put in place a set of constraints and monitoring measures that will help to assure that Iran's nuclear program will be for peaceful purposes only. Major U.S. objectives have been achieved: uranium enrichment limited to 3.67% and only at the Natanz plant; the Arak reactor will be re-designed to minimize the amount of plutonium produced and Iran is barred from separating plutonium and all spent fuel will be removed from Iran; a 98% reduction in Iran's stockpile of low enriched uranium for 15 years; unprecedented surveillance of nuclear activities and control of nuclear related imports; a two-thirds reduction in the installed centrifuges for ten years; constraints on research and development of advanced centrifuges. The agreement will set up a highly effective multilayered program to monitor and inspect every aspect of Iran's nuclear supply chain and fuel cycle, including continuous monitoring at some sites for 20-25 years, and permit inspections on short notice. We have followed carefully the negotiations as they have progressed and conclude that the JCPOA represents the achievement of greater security for us and our partners in the region.

We acknowledge that the JCPOA does not achieve all of the goals its current detractors have set for it. But it does meet all of the key objectives. Most importantly, should Iran violate the agreement and move toward building nuclear weapons, it will be discovered early and in sufficient time for strong countermeasures to be taken to stop Iran. No agreement between multiple parties can be a perfect agreement without risks. We believe without this agreement, the risks to the security of the U.S. and its friends would be far greater. We have also not heard any viable alternatives from those who oppose the implementation of the JCPOA.

We, the undersigned, have devoted our careers to the peace and security of the United States in both Republican and Democratic Administrations. U.S. presidents and Congresses over the past 20 years have joined in a bipartisan policy of sanctioning and isolating Iran to prevent a nuclear weapon. There was bipartisan understanding that when the Iranians indicated a readiness to talk the U.S. would lead the negotiations to test Iran's seriousness. Indeed the Corker-Cardin legislation, which was approved this past spring by an overwhelming bipartisan vote in both the House and Senate was signed into law by the President, defines the review process that the Congress will use over the coming months. Members of both political parties can deservedly take credit for bringing us to this moment.

We welcome the discussion that will unfold over the merits of this agreement. We urge members of Congress to be closely involved in the oversight, monitoring and enforcement of this agreement. As Congress was so diligent and constructive in pressing forward the highly effective sanctions regime that helped get Iran to the table, it must now play a key role in the implementation of the agreement which they helped bring about. Congressional approval will eventually be required to lift sanctions under the agreement. Arrangements now need to be made to assure that Congress is a full partner in its implementation.

Those who advocate rejection of the JCPOA should evaluate whether there is a feasible alternative for better protecting U.S. security and more effectively preventing Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon. The consequences of rejection are grave: the unraveling of international sanctions; U.S. responsibility for the collapse of the agreement; and the possible development of an Iranian nuclear weapon under significantly

reduced or no inspections. A rejection of the agreement could leave the U.S. with the only alternative of having to use military force unilaterally in the future.

We call on the Administration to place the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action in a strategic context: assuring our partners in the region that the United States remains fully committed to their defense and to countering any destabilizing Iranian actions in the region. We also call on the Administration, with the express support of the Congress, to make clear that it will remain the firm policy of the United States, during the agreement's initial 10 to 15 years as well as after key restrictions expire, to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon by all available means.

We will join in a bipartisan effort to formulate a balanced and objective assessment and implementation of this agreement. We are committed to building an effective strategy for its full implementation. This effort will be critical in view of the agreement's significance for the protection of the security of the U.S. and its friends and for preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Amb. (ret.) Morton Abramowitz, Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research and Ambassador to Thailand and Turkey

Madeleine Albright, U.S. Secretary of State

Samuel Berger, U.S. National Security Advisor

Zbigniew Brzezinski, U.S. National Security Advisor

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BGen. (ret.) Stephen A. Cheney, U.S. Marine Corps

Joseph Cirincione, President of the Ploughshares Fund

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Amb. (ret.) Ryan Crocker, Ambassador to Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Syria, Kuwait, and Lebanon

Tom Daschle, U.S. Senator and Senate Majority Leader

Suzanne DiMaggio, Director of the 21st Century Diplomacy Project at New America

Amb. (ret.) James Dobbins, Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan

Robert Einhorn, Assistant Secretary for Nonproliferation and Secretary of State's Special Advisor for Nonproliferation and Arms Control

Amb. (ret.) Stuart E. Eizenstat, Deputy Treasury Secretary and Department of State's Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues in the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs

Michele Flournoy, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy

Leslie Gelb, Assistant Secretary of State for Political-Military Affairs and Director of Policy Planning and Arms Control at the Department of Defense

Morton H. Halperin, Director of Policy Planning, Department of State

Lee H. Hamilton, U.S. House of Representatives and Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee

Amb. (ret.) William C. Harrop, Ambassador to Israel and Inspector General of the State Department

Gary Hart, U.S. Senator and Special Envoy to Northern Ireland

Stephen B. Heintz, President, Rockefeller Brothers Fund

Amb. (ret.) Christopher Hill, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs and Ambassador to Iraq, Korea, Poland, and Macedonia

Amb. (ret.) Carla A. Hills, U.S. Trade Representative

James Hoge, former Editor, Foreign Affairs Magazine

J. Bennett Johnston, U.S. Senator

Nancy Landon Kassebaum, U.S. Senator

LTG (ret.) Frank Kearney, U.S. Army

Carl Levin, U.S. Senator and Chairman of the Senate Committee on Armed Services

Amb. (ret.) Winston Lord, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and the Pacific, Ambassador to China and Director of State Department Policy Planning

Amb. (ret.) William H. Luers, Ambassador to Czechoslovakia and Venezuela

Jessica T. Mathews, Director of the Office of Global Issues of the National Security Council

George J. Mitchell, U.S. Senator and Senate Majority Leader

Amb. (ret.) William G. Miller, Ambassador to Ukraine

Amb. (ret.) Richard W. Murphy, Ambassador to Saudi Arabia and Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

Vali Nasr, Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan and Dean of Johns Hopkins University SAIS

Richard Nephew, Director for Iran, National Security Council and Deputy Coordinator for Sanctions Policy at the Department of State

Joseph Nye, Assistant Secretary of Defense and Chairman National Intelligence Council

Paul O'Neill, U.S. Secretary of the Treasury

Admiral (ret.) Eric Olson, U.S. Navy and Commander of U.S. Special Operations Command

William Perry, U.S. Secretary of Defense

Amb. (ret.) Thomas Pickering, Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, and Ambassador to Israel, Russia, India, United Nations, El Salvador, Nigeria, and Jordan

Paul R. Pillar, National Intelligence Officer for the Near East and South Asia

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Joe R. Reeder, Deputy Secretary of the Army and Chairman of the Panama Canal Commission

Donald W. Riegle, U.S. Senator

William Reinsch, Under Secretary of Commerce for Export Administration and President National Foreign Trade Council

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