

National Jewish Leadership Advocacy Day on Iran

September 10, 2009



STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

We, hundreds of representatives of national Jewish organizations and Jewish communities from across the United States, joined by many non-Jewish friends, gather in our nation's capital to assert the urgency of U.S. and international efforts to prevent the Iranian regime from acquiring a nuclear weapons capability. As we do so, we express solidarity with the brave people of Iran who have taken to the streets in their just struggle for greater freedom and human rights.

We support the position expressed by President Obama that Iran's acquisition of a nuclear arms capacity is "unacceptable." The administration and Congress, on both sides of the aisle, have demonstrated full recognition that this would pose a grave threat to fundamental U.S. national security interests and to world peace.

A nuclear-armed Iran would:

- * Destabilize an already volatile Middle East and stimulate a nuclear arms race in the region;
- * Pose a very real risk that nuclear weapons technology would be shared with Al Qaeda, Hezbollah, Hamas and other extremist organizations with a long history of launching devastating terrorist attacks against targets in the United States, Western Europe, the Middle East and South America;
- * Endanger the security of our allies in the region, particularly Israel, which has been threatened by Iranian leaders with annihilation, as well as moderate Sunni Arab nations, which have made their concerns known;
- * Undermine efforts to achieve Middle East peace, as an emboldened Iran would seek to strengthen rejectionist forces among the Palestinians and the wider Arab world and would make it less likely that moderate Arab regimes would seek reconciliation with Israel.

We have come to Washington to urge the United States to lead a concerted and robust international effort, utilizing a combination of strong diplomatic and economic measures, to persuade Tehran to fully cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency and to desist from its nuclear weapons initiative.

We URGE Congress to adopt new legislation expeditiously – including the Iran Refined Petroleum Sanctions Act (IRPSA), the Iran Sanctions Enabling Act and other related bills – and we encourage the administration to take full advantage of these additional tools in order to advance the international effort.

There is no way to know for sure when Iran might cross the nuclear arms threshold, but we do know that the time to prevent that from happening is rapidly running out.

We take very seriously the danger posed by a head of a government who says he wants to destroy Israel and who says the Holocaust did not occur. A government that has so little regard for human life, truth, and human rights must not be entrusted to possess the most powerful weapons known to humankind.