

STATEMENT

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USADI Supports Firm Stance by President Bush on Iran's Nuclear Program

The US Alliance for Democratic Iran (USADI) fully supports the firm stance by President George W. Bush's against Iran's secret nuclear program. The USADI calls upon the administration to lead the efforts in taking Iran's flagrant violations of non-proliferation protocols to the Security Council. America's national security interests and Middle East stability are far too important to be left in the hands of the EU. If Iran, "the most active state sponsor of terrorism," acquires a nuclear weapon, it would only be a matter of time until the terrorist groups it supports will also have access to them.

As President stated in his address at the Newspaper Association of America Convention last Wednesday, Iran's development of nuclear weapon must not be tolerated, "otherwise they will be dealt with, starting through the United Nations," and it is "essential that they hear that message."

President's clear reference to difficulty of negotiating any kind of agreement with Iran's ruling theocracy, was highlighted by his emphasize on the fact that Washington has to make sure that Britain, France, and Germany "speak as plainly as possible to the Iranians, and make it absolutely clear that the development of a nuclear weapon in Iran is intolerable."

Given their lucrative trade relations and regional geopolitical rivalries with the United States, the EU may believe they have legitimate reasons for leniency towards Tehran, but the specter of an Iran armed with nuclear weapons is too frightening and too destabilizing to let the EU to take the lead.

The meetings this week by Tehran's Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi in London and Paris were primarily designed to justify Iran's continuing breaches and to buy time. While he was touring Europe, Tehran was doing its utmost to hide its nuclear projects. Last month, the *Los Angeles Times* reported Iran has set up a committee consisting of senior officials to coordinate the concealment of key elements of the country's nuclear program from UN inspectors. The *Times* adds that the committee's most pressing tasks include trying to hide nuclear evidence at nearly 300 locations around the country.

Last year, after 18 years of deception and double talk, Iran was forced to acknowledge it had been secretly developing a nuclear capability, in violation of relevant non-proliferation protocols. The IAEA's reports have chronicled staggering breaches of Iran's obligations and, short of an actual bomb attached to it, leave no doubt that Tehran does have a nuclear weapons program.

Tehran's past conduct and attempt to exert its dominance in the Gulf region, leaves no doubt that it has strategic goals in developing nuclear arms and it would be naïve to suggest that Iran's rulers have had a change of heart. This is where U.S. leadership must remain unwavering in its demand that the Security Council take up Tehran's nuclear breaches.

In the long term, however, only a regime change led by Iranians will ensure that Iran will be free of weapons of mass destruction. Simultaneous with its efforts in the IAEA, the US administration should increase its support of the democracy movement in Iran and embrace democratic opposition forces that are working to oust the ruling mullahs.

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