

Checking Iran's Nuclear Ambitions

Report Recommendations

Nonproliferation Policy Education Center Project on Iran

This report is based on commissioned research and commentary of over 30 of the nation's leading experts on Iran and nuclear proliferation. It was over a year in the making. Unlike most analyses, which have focused solely on the immediate worry of Iran going nuclear, it sees Iran's nuclear program as a persistent danger and catalyst for other states to acquire nuclear weapons options of their own. These nuclear programs along with Iran's would confront the U.S. and its allies with intolerable long-term security dangers. The report neither supports overt military action against Iran's nuclear facilities nor trying to cut a deal with Iran not to make nuclear weapons. Instead, it makes three recommendations, none of which U.S. or allied officials have yet fully adopted:

1. Challenge Iran's NPT noncompliance as being decisive to the future of nuclear nonproliferation. If Iran succeeds in coming within weeks of being able to breakout of the NPT and quickly acquire nuclear weapons, it will demonstrate to the world (and every other nation that might want nuclear weapons) how any state can use the NPT to get the bomb making capabilities they want. Unlike what was done with Iraq or North Korea, then, the U.S. and other like-minded nations need to enforce and amplify the NPT to curb Iran before it acquires more than a bomb's worth of separated plutonium or highly enriched uranium (HEU). Toward this end, the IAEA should urged to follow the requirements of its charter and at least file an interim report to the UNSC about the known technical IAEA violations Iran has itself admitted to and highlight concerns the IAEA still has about additional Iranian weapons-related activities relating to the trace quantities of HEU that the IAEA has found. In addition, this report should

- insist that Iran uphold the freeze on its uranium enrichment and processing activities that it agreed to October 21 with Germany, France, and the United Kingdom,
- establish a reasonable schedule for clarifying the origin of the trace amounts of the bomb usable highly enriched uranium (HEU) the IAEA has found.
- call on all nations to temporarily suspend any further nuclear cooperation with Iran until the IAEA can clarify this matter and establish whether or not Iran has come into full compliance with the NPT.
- ask the permanent five members of the UNSC (P-5) to agree to how they would act upon receipt of an IAEA report that either found a member not to be clearly in full compliance with its IAEA safeguards agreement or the NPT;

Among the country-neutral resolutions that the P-5 should consider and urge the UNSC to adopt while the IAEA is evaluating the evidence concerning Iran's compliance status are

- authorizing UN members to interdict the imports of any technology, material, or equipment relevant to the development of nuclear weapons or their means of delivery to any nation that the IAEA had formally identified as no longer being clearly in full compliance with its NPT obligations;
- banning any peaceful nuclear cooperation with such state the IAEA has identified until the IAEA confirms its full compliance with the NPT ;
- prohibiting NPT members from withdrawing from the treaty (i.e., requiring the imposition all the obligations of the NPT on all NPT members whether they have been identified by the IAEA or not) unless or until they first surrender all of the nuclear capabilities they previously gained while a member of the treaty;
- authorizing the imposition of U.N. and U.N. member state economic penalties against states the IAEA has identified as no longer clearly being in full compliance with their NPT obligations on a progressive basis, starting with small measures (e.g., a ban on loans from international financial institutions) and escalating to harsher measures.
- creating a P-5 NPT secretariat to see to it that above measures are actually implemented.

The aim of these resolutions (and their development, which would take several months) would be three-fold. First, their development and adoption should help deter further violation of the NPT by Iran and to spell out what action the UNSC would take when the IAEA finally determines Iran's compliance status. Second, they (and their country-neutral character) should help deter Iran's neighbors, or other nations, who might otherwise be tempted to hedge their security bets by acquiring a nuclear weapons option of their own. Third, they should help give the Russians and the Europeans additional justification for withholding preferential trade and nuclear cooperation from Iran if it persists in developing a nuclear weapons option.

Finally, for reasons detailed later in this report, it is clear from the evidence the IAEA has found already that the agency ultimately will have to conclude that Iran is no longer clearly in full compliance with its NPT obligations, i.e., that Iran is in violation. This, in turn, should trigger the sanction responses detailed above.

2. Encourage Iranians to debate the merits of their nuclear power program and support of terrorism. The IAEA demands made of Iran at its last board of governors meeting September 12th prompted a limited debate. Iranian officials, however, were not pressed very hard. Although some hardliners still object to Iran making any concessions, no official has yet conceded that Tehran should give up its enrichment or power reactor programs. Nor has any Iranian official argued that Iran can do more than it already has to explain the mysterious HEU

traces IAEA inspectors found. A key reason why more debate has not been generated in Iran about Tehran's nuclear policies is that few in the U.S. or Europe have insisted that Iran do much more than minimally satisfy the IAEA. This must change. First, the more Iranians are pressed on their nuclear policies and continued support of terrorism, the more likely it is that the current government will make additional needed concessions. Second, and more important, the more Iran is pressed on these issues, the more likely it is that the internal debate it produces in Iran will itself foster greater firmness within the international community to press on these matters. This, in turn, will be critical to warn off other states from ever trying to emulate Iran's example. Of course, those that want to work with the revolutionary government in Iran claim that is what they are trying to accomplish by offering to cut Tehran a deal - i.e., to give it benefits up front in exchange for promises of better Iranian behavior later. The history of the last two decades of such deal making, however, is a story of time invested with little to show in return. In the case of deal making over Iran's nuclear program, the time lost, moreover, will only bring Iran closer to acquiring bombs. Instead of taking this approach, then, the U.S. and its allies should make it clear to Iranians what they can expect the costs and benefits will be to their country of pursuing alternative nuclear foreign policies. Specifically, after the P-5 considers the country-neutral proliferation-related resolutions noted above and the IAEA and the UNSC sanction Iran, the U.S. and its friends should highlight the prospect of Iran having to engage in a competition against most of its neighbors and the world and contrast this with the benefits Iran could expect to receive if it relinquished its nuclear power program and cut its ties with terrorist organizations. Tehran should be told that if it fails to follow up its latest October 21 pledge to suspend its enrichment of uranium with verifiable moves to dismantle its nuclear power program, it will risk being further isolated economically, diplomatically, and militarily. Conversely, the major powers should make it clear that Iran can expect to receive security guarantees, an end to U.S. sanctions, and access to high technology and international capital markets if Iran dismantles all of its nuclear power-related facilities (i.e., all but its small research reactor facilities) and ends its support of terrorist organizations. The deadlines for Tehran taking these remedial actions should be early and clear -- i.e., well before Iran could possibly acquire its first bomb - within 24 months or less. At the same time and to assure this explanation has credibility among Iranian reformers, the U.S. should launch additional long-term initiatives to undermine the revolutionary government's efforts to demonize America. These initiatives should include more creative forms of outreach as well as direct forms of relief such as increased disaster relief and public health assistance.

3. If Iran continues to pursue worrisome nuclear activities, ramp up U.S. and allied military regional capabilities both to neutralize the Iranian threat and forestall further proliferation. The United States and the military coalition in Iraq already must guarantee Iraq's security against a potentially hostile Iran. The U.S. and its key allies are also committed to interdicting commerce in nuclear weapons-related items to trouble states like Iran under the Proliferation

Security Initiative. Beyond this, the U.S. and its key allies ought to consult with the Gulf Coordination Council states, Jordan, Turkey, Israel, and Egypt about what these nations' military plans are for coping with a militant, nuclear (or near-nuclear) Iran. Plans should be prepared now on how additional military cooperation (including intelligence sharing, missile defense cooperation, joint training, etc., base sharing agreements) might best counter the threat and what new security arrangements, if any, would be appropriate. Details on these issues will be developed as a part of NPEC's planned follow on study, which will be completed in 2004.

Principal Assumptions

Some may see these recommendations as harsh. Given what the IAEA has learned about Iran's nuclear weapons effort, though, the urgency of addressing Iran's possible breakout has clearly increased. Stunned earlier this year by the discovery of several new nuclear production facilities, trace quantities of highly enriched uranium, and Iran's admission to making uranium metal and importing significant quantities of special nuclear materials from China, most experts now believe Iran could get a bomb within three to five years, while some analysts fear it could do so in 24 months or less. Given the size of Iran's nuclear power-related facilities, completion of its first weapon, moreover, could quickly be followed with the production of scores of weapons. Iran's neighbors -- nations that are all historically allied with the U.S, including Israel, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Egypt - - are unlikely to welcome Iran coming so close to acquiring nuclear weapons. The adverse responses they might take include seeking new security ties, acquiring their own nuclear weapons options and relying less on the United States to assure their security.

All of these possibilities highlight America's need to act decisively with its closest friends to dissuade Iran from continuing on its current path and to make sure that no nation emulates Iran's nuclear example. The question is how.

Currently, there are three fashionable proposals to curb Iran's nuclear program, each of which is too uncertain or too self-defeating to effectively address the nuclear threat:

Bomb Iran's known nuclear sites. Iranians fear this. Exercising this option, though, is risky. A "surgical" strike could start a war (Iranian counterstrikes against US forces in Iraq or terrorist strikes elsewhere against the U.S. and Israel, etc.). Even with the best planning, such a strike would be unlikely to destroy all of Iran's covert weapons efforts or stop its weapons scientists from resuming work. To maximize surprise, the U.S. (or Israel) would want to attack before securing other nations' support. This, however, could jeopardize international backing to contain Iran afterwards and would likely raise serious doubts about the utility of

the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) -- norms that might otherwise help justify such a raid.

Change the regime. The U.S. and its allies say they want to promote human rights and pluralistic politics in Iran. Ultimately, this requires regime change (whether by overthrow or major reform). How might this advance nuclear nonproliferation in Iran? Is the regime in Iran likely to change before it acquires a bomb? Would a new government end the nuclear program (or surrender any bomb materials it might have produced)? How (if at all) could promoting such a change stigmatize Iran as an NPT violator to discourage would be bomb makers from following suit? The answers to these questions remain unclear.

Cut a deal. Many officials in Europe, Asia, Russia and China favor cutting a deal with Tehran. They would like to see the October 21 understanding the United Kingdom, France and Germany reached with Iran October 21 as the first step toward a larger deal. The logic of this approach is to give Iran what it wants -- U.S. recognition, lifting of U.S. sanctions, U.S. security guarantees and, in time, withdrawal of U.S. military forces in the Gulf, and access to advanced technology and Western markets -- for what we want -- an end to Iran's dangerous nuclear activities, a cut-off of support of terrorist organizations, and adherence to agreed human rights strictures. But how long would it take to conclude such deal? How could one prevent Iran from stringing the U.S. and its allies along until it acquired all it needed to breakout with a nuclear arsenal? Given what Iran could do covertly and the vast amounts of plutonium its power reactors would be producing, how likely is any inspection, including the IAEA's new 1992+3 inspection protocol to detect covert enrichment or reprocessing activities early enough to prevent Iran's speedy completion of a bomb? Could the current government, which has already cheated on the NPT, be trusted to deliver on its promises? How could any deal be cut without it looking like a reward for Iran skirting the NPT? Would such a deal with the hard-line government undercut pro-American democratic reformers by suggesting that America's real interest is geo-strategic realpolitik rather than support for liberalization? How could a deal be squared with the Bush administration's declaration that past deals with Middle East autocrats fed anti-Americanism and terrorism and that it is now in U.S. strategic interest to transform the Middle East?

Considering only these options, the outlook for halting Iran's program seems grim. Yet, if one views the current nuclear crisis as part of a larger, long-term,

security competition, the U.S. and its friends have clear advantages that would allow them to take approaches different from the those described above. In a year-long series of Nonproliferation Policy Education Center (NPEC) workshops, 30 regional experts, in fact, identified three enduring weaknesses of the current Iranian regime that could be exploited:

It is enormously unpopular. Recent student demonstrations and the consequent government crack down (with thousands of arrests) are indicative of how 70 percent of the population (now under age 30 that have no memory of the 1979 revolution) feels. The government's fear of popular resistance forces it to fractionate and repress a variety of government bodies to guard against significant political reform. It also requires it to maintain an external threat to sustain domestic control. As a result, Iranian officials tend to demonize the U.S. and Israel and obsess about what Iran's immediate neighbors might do. This last point has immediate implications for any negotiated deal over Iran's nuclear program. When members of Iran's Expediency Council met in Geneva with the co-chairmen of this project, they had difficulty believing the U.S. and its allies would reverse their hostility toward Iran if Iran cut off its ties to terrorist organizations, promoted human rights, and terminated its nuclear program. Instead, they wanted the U.S. to agree to a list of demands before Iran acted.

It is strategically lonely. Iran lacks friends and does not work well with others. Despite its most recent agreement to suspend its uranium enrichment activities (for how long, it still is unclear), it still is at odds with the European Union over human rights; the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for dodging agency resolutions that it come totally clean on its nuclear past; and the U.S. and most of the world for harboring and supporting terrorists - now including Al Qaeda agents -- who are all too willing to use any means (including chemical, biological or nuclear devices) to attack Israel, Europe and the U.S. Given its loneliness, Tehran is particularly anxious to avoid being brought before the UN. Meanwhile, locally, Iran is suspicious of nearly all of its neighbors and is still quite frightened of being attacked or subverted by the U.S. or Israel. This, in turn, encourages it to turn inward. The end result is that the country that Iran now has the closest military cooperation with -- North Korea -- is itself on the outs. As for its closest diplomatic allies -- Russia and China -- these states' help is triggered less by Iran's needs than a desire to oppose the U.S.

It is desperate for Western help. The flip-side of Iran's strategic loneliness is its overweening sense of self-importance. Iranian officials believe that Iran should be the most powerful and richest

state in the region and cannot understand why it is not. Meanwhile, Iran's high level of corruption and state interference in the economy has wrecked the economy and produced a domestic unemployment rate of over 25 percent: To deal with this, Iran must let over 200,000 of its young people immigrate annually to the West to find work. As Iranian officials see it, the only way to reverse these trends is to get full access to advanced Western technology, Western financial assets, and America's enormous export market.

What is interesting about these weaknesses is how they feed one another: The more strategically lonely Iran gets, the more desperate it is for Western help; the more unpopular its government becomes, the more it blames outside forces for its shortcomings. This, in turn, only makes it more strategically isolated. There was considerable debate among the workshop participants about how long the current regime might last and what it would take to bring it down -- some thinking it was fragile, most thinking that it would go on for many years. But, in the end, all thought Iran would eventually give way to some more moderate form of rule.

Given the uncertainty regarding the revolutionary government's longevity, the question arises as to how the U.S. and its friends should proceed against Iran's nuclear program, which is progressing at a rapid rate. If the objective is to try to terminate the program immediately, the shortcomings of the three most popular options already noted come into play. If, on the other hand, the objective is to keep Iran from making or deploying nuclear weapons and to make sure Iran doesn't become a model for other would be bomb makers to follow, then the U.S. and its friends can exploit the Revolutionary government's enduring weaknesses. With proper care, the U.S. and its allies could even see Iran's current government give way to a less hostile regime. These long-term aims were the ones the working group believed were the ones most worthy of U.S. and allied effort and would require timely application of one or more of America's and its allies' strengths. These include:

Power to lead and maintain military alliances. In the last 16 years, the U.S. has operated alone or in concert effectively against Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan. More important, after toppling Saddam and the Taliban, the U.S. and its friends have made it clear that they will be backing Iraq's and Afghanistan's security and in all probability operating out of Iraq and Afghanistan for the next decade or more. In addition, the U.S. has friendly military relations with the U.K., Spain, Poland, Japan, most of the European Union, Pakistan, Israel, Egypt, Kuwait, Turkey, Jordan and most of the Gulf Coordinating Council. It also has close ties with several nations that have extensive experience operating covertly against a variety of Middle Eastern nations.

Ability to apply economic leverage. The U.S., the European Union and Japan have all been on record opposing Iran's nuclear weapons activities. All have backed the IAEA's efforts to get Iran to come clean on its previously undeclared nuclear activities. Japan has held back from investing billions for oil development in Iran. The European Union, meanwhile, has put off extending a major trade protocol with Iran until and unless it makes its nuclear program more transparent, improves its human rights record, and ends its ties with terrorist organizations. Germany, France, and Great Britain indicated in their October 21 understanding that Iran "could expect easier access to modern technology and supplies in a wide range of areas" but only if it suspends its enrichment and processing activities and is able to convince the IAEA that its nuclear activities are entirely peaceful. Also, the U.S., which constitutes Iran's largest potential export market, could expand trade with Tehran significantly, if it chose to do so. To date, Washington has cut off private U.S. investment in Iran and has frozen Iranian overseas assets which Iran erroneously believes amounts to billions of dollars.

Attractive alternative political and social culture. The U.S. and Europe are culturally attractive to a majority of Iranian citizens. Many have visited and studied in the West and continue to do so. More have listened to or seen Western popular music, TV or movies. Western democracy is also seen as an attractive political alternative. The current government encourages some expressions of popular will and is quite sensitive about its lack of popularity for this reason. Recently, the government actually paid Cuba to jam alternative Iranian broadcasting from Los Angeles for fear of its seditious influence. Precisely because the government paints the United States as the Great Satan, embracing aspects of U.S. and Western culture is seen by Iranians as a way to resist.

Competitive Strategies

Keeping these strengths in mind, participants in NPEC's workshops suggested that the U.S. and its friends approach curbing Iran's nuclear ambitions as part of a larger, more general competition whose aims would include:

- Demonstrating U.S. and allied support for the welfare of common Iranians. This effort should be geared to help undermine the Revolutionary government's efforts to portray the U.S. and its friends as security threats that warrant repressive domestic rule.
- Making it clear to Iran and its neighbors (i.e., Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Syria, and Turkey) that following Iran's nuclear example or violating the NPT is a

poor way to hedge their own security bets and that NPT and IAEA requirements are firm and will be enforced.

- Showing America's allies who believe a quick deal with Iran is possible and desirable that any sound understanding -- one with clear, worth goals and deadlines -- is something that the current regime is incapable of delivering on until and unless the government undergoes major change.
- Alerting Iran that any further progress on its "civilian" nuclear power program risks isolating it further and increasing the military risks it otherwise would not have to run.
- Creating a P-5 NPT secretariat to see to it that above measures are actually implemented.

To achieve these larger goals, the group concluded that the U.S. and its friends should pursue a series at least three separate but related competitive strategies. These strategies' ultimate aim would be to deter and delay Iran and its neighbors from developing or deploying nuclear weapons, keep America's allies united in opposing the current regime's most threatening activities, and increase pressures on the current regime either to change or to give way to a less hostile one that would be less wedded to having nuclear weapons:

1. Challenge Iran's NPT noncompliance as being decisive to the future of nuclear nonproliferation. The U.S. has done well to get the IAEA Board of Governors (including Russia) to demand that Iran freeze its enrichment and possible reprocessing facilities, allow more intrusive inspections, and clarify its past nuclear activities. Firmness on these points prompted Iran to agree to accede to these demands in an understanding reached with Germany, France, and the United Kingdom October 21, 2003. Senior Iranian officials made it very clear that under no circumstances could their country succeed if the matter of their nuclear activities were characterized as being illegal and were referred to the United Nations for action. An immediate danger now that Tehran has said it would comply with the IAEA's September 12th demands, however, is that the U.S. or its allies might settle for only partial delivery on Iran's pledges. Given growing evidence that Iran is developing a nuclear weapons option, such weakness would not only give Iran a pass to pursue its nuclear ambitions, but encourage other nuclear weapons aspirants (starting with Iran's neighbors) to follow in Tehran's footsteps. This later prospect is at least as worrisome as the first. It will likely take the IAEA some months to make sense of the Iranian documents and nuclear equipment it is now examining in its effort to determine Iran's NPT compliance status. During this period, the IAEA should call for a temporary suspension of all nuclear cooperation with Iran. Ultimately, however, the IAEA will have little choice but to find Iran either to be in violation or not clearly in full compliance and this, in turn, should prompt sanctions. Indeed, doing anything less would seriously jeopardize the IAEA's credibility and that of the NPT. The reasons why already are plain:

- Iran has already admitted to violating its safeguards agreement with the IAEA by not properly alerting the IAEA about its importation of uranium and conversion of uranium into metal.
- The IAEA's own statute stipulates that the agency must report all safeguards violations to the UNSC. As such, not to report would be to have the IAEA punt on its own procedures and suggest that the IAEA can be duped or bullied.
- Although the IAEA set October 31 as the deadline for Iran to explain the trace amounts of HEU the IAEA found, Iranian officials claim that they will never be able to fully resolve this mystery except to claim that the centrifuge equipment they imported was "contaminated" and that the brokers that sold this equipment can't say where they bought this equipment from.
- HEU is directly usable to make kiloton-yield weapons.
- There is good reason to believe that this equipment came by way of Pakistan's or Russia's nuclear weapons program (which goes to Iran's intent to build weapons in violation of Article II of the NPT, a key provision that prohibits non-weapons state members from seeking or receiving "any assistance in the manufacture of nuclear weapons"). On this last point, Iranian officials insist that the burden of proof that it is in violation is on the IAEA. Yet, just the reverse is the case: Once a state is found in possession of undeclared special nuclear materials, the burden is on it to explain how it could possess such material without being found in violation of the NPT.
- If Iran did enrich uranium to make HEU, it would have violated its IAEA safeguards agreement since it would have failed to notify the IAEA of the introduction of special nuclear material into an undeclared enrichment facility.
- If the IAEA fails to report these points to the UNSC as the IAEA's charter requires, it will appear weak and only encourage more Iranian welshing (e.g., Iranian officials' recent announcement that it is "studying" how it could possibly suspend its enrichment activity).

Finally, unless an IAEA violations finding is in prospect (or its functional equivalent - i.e., an IAEA finding that it cannot find Iran to be in full compliance), any state could simply follow Iran's example and violate the NPT or IAEA in the expectation that the IAEA would give them a similar pass.

In addition to these points, members of the IAEA's board of governors should reflect on IAEA director general El Baradei's own recent public warnings that were prominently featured in the October 18, 2003 edition of *The Economist*. In a detailed column that he authored, the director general spoke out about the limitations of IAEA inspections. There is no monitoring effort, he explained, not even the additional protocol the IAEA is asking Iran to implement, that can prevent nations from acquiring nuclear weapons so long as they are allowed to have enrichment, reprocessing, and power reactor programs. NPEC-

commissioned research corroborates these points. If Iran uses natural uranium, it could make its first bomb in 36 months or less. In the case of using light water reactor fresh fuel as enrichment feed, the time lines would be much shorter - under selected scenarios, a matter of days or weeks. Once Iran's light water power reactor is up and running, the time lines for it making plutonium for bombs are also short. The Russians announced in the fall of 2003 that they intend to slip the completion date of the reactor another 2 years. It remains to be seen if the Russians stick to this schedule. Russia has also proposed to take back any spent fuel generated from Bushehr. In any case, 12-15 months after the reactor goes into operation, it will contain roughly 60 bombs' worth of near weapons-grade plutonium. With only modest investment, Iran could easily build a reprocessing plant covertly at any time in four to six months in a space 30 feet by 40 feet by 130 feet using readily accessible technology. With such a facility on the ready, Iran could run the reactor and tell inspectors and Russians that it wants to examine the spent fuel. This might cause alarm (or not); it would hardly matter. In as little as a week, well before anyone could agree on the facts, much less a clear course of action, Iran could make a bomb's worth of plutonium metal a day.

It is for this reason and because of Iran's past cheating (and its contradictory explanations about the trace quantities of HEU inspectors found), that the IAEA should report to the UNSC even before it completes its analysis of Iranian documents and equipment associated with the agency's discovery of trace quantities of HEU. In this "interim" report, the IAEA should

- call on all nations to temporarily suspend any further nuclear cooperation with Iran until the IAEA can clarify this matter and establish whether or not Iran has come into full compliance with the NPT.
- insist that Iran uphold the freeze on its uranium enrichment and processing activities that it agreed to October 21 with Germany, France, and the United Kingdom,
- establish a reasonable schedule for clarifying the origin of the trace amounts of bomb usable highly enriched uranium (HEU) the IAEA has found.
- ask the permanent five members of the UNSC (P-5) to agree to how they would act upon receipt of an IAEA report that found a member not to be clearly in full compliance with either its IAEA safeguards agreement or the NPT.

The filing of this report would be immediately beneficial. At the very least, it should help provide the justification the Russians need to keep from completing Bushehr. This is important. Without Bushehr, Iran lacks any "peaceful" justification for mining, enriching, or reprocessing nuclear materials for power production. Also, without this reactor, Iran would be deprived of the lightly enriched uranium fuel required to complete the two quickest routes to generating a large number of nuclear weapons - weapons usable plutonium from Bushehr's

spent fuel or weapons uranium derived from the lightly enriched uranium it could feed into its centrifuge program.

It also could help set a major revitalization of the NPT into motion by getting the P-5 focused on enforcing the NPT. Such an effort is urgently needed since the UNSC has still taken no action on the IAEA's violation report it filed in February of 2003 regarding North Korea.

Among the NPT enforcement actions the P-5 ought to consider and adopt are:

- calling on all nations to cooperate in interdicting all nuclear related exports and imports to and from the identified violator until that nation comes back into full compliance with the NPT.
- banning any further peaceful nuclear cooperation with any state the IAEA has determined is not clearly in full compliance with its NPT obligations until such time as the agency validates full adherence.
- insisting that all of the provisions of the NPT continue to apply to states even if they then attempt to withdraw from the NPT until and unless they dismantle or surrender the nuclear goods they have acquired under the NPT.
- authorizing increasingly stiff economic sanctions against states the IAEA identifies as no longer clearly being in full compliance with their NPT obligations starting with the suspension of international financial institutional investments so long as the noncompliant state fails to resolve its violations.
- creating a P-5 NPT secretariat to see to it that above measures are actually implemented.

This effort, like the IAEA's own review of the evidence regarding Iran, would likely take several months. During this period, though, there would be a presumption against any state taking any step to violate or undermine the NPT. Beyond this, it also would increase U.S. and allied leverage to get Iran to reconsider its nuclear program, and increase international support for isolating Iran if it continues to develop nuclear weapons-related capabilities.

2. Encourage Iranians to debate the merits of their nuclear power program and support of terrorism. As has already been noted, Iran could possibly have its first uranium bomb in as little as two years. It will take some months, at best, to get the IAEA and the UN Security Council to determine Iran's compliance status and to impose sanctions as appropriate. Whatever the outcome of these international efforts, though, the U.S. and its allies need separately to explain what Iranians can expect from a U.S.-led coalition if Iran continues its nuclear power program (which effectively assures Iran a nuclear weapons option) and Iran retains its ties to terrorist organizations. At the same time, the U.S. and its key allies should also explain what benefits Iranians can expect -- improved relations with the West that include a lifting of sanctions, major power security

guarantees, energy aid, enhanced trade relations with Europe, and formal diplomatic relations with the U.S. - if they drop their ties to terrorists and end their nuclear power activities.

A key requirement for receiving any benefits would be for Iran to dismantle its nuclear power-related facilities in a verifiable way. The dismantling of these facilities would have to commence before these facilities could ever produce their first bomb's worth of uranium or plutonium, i.e., before the end of 2005. If Iran did this, the U.S. and its key Western allies should ease work visa regulations to help absorb the many Iranian nuclear technicians that would otherwise be without work. Iran would also have to cut ties to terrorist organizations. Here the potential nexus between terrorism and nuclear weapons figures largely. Certainly, if Iran comes within weeks of being able to have a large arsenal of nuclear weapons, it will only feel more confident in sheltering and supporting terrorists, the harboring of which would otherwise make Iran a potential military target. There also is the prospect that Iran might actually share its nuclear knowledge with these organizations. In this case, Iran could use these groups as strategic proxies to pose the very nuclear threats - against the U.S., Iran's neighbors and Israel - that Iran's own acquisition of a weapons option would otherwise accomplish. Also, as long as Iran keeps its ties to these terrorist organizations, it can always arm them with chemical or biological agents and other explosives even if it abandons its nuclear power-related activities. With these arms, terrorists could accomplish many of the same goals that the U.S. and its allies fear these organizations might with nuclear weapons. Getting Iran to cut its terrorist ties, as such, is no less critical than getting it to end its nuclear weapons relevant activities.

Who should take the lead in explaining these points to Iran -- Washington, the European Union, Russia, or the P-5 - and how these points would be presented, would have to be worked out.

As a compliment to this effort and to increase the credibility of the benefits Iranians could expect if they did drop their nuclear power program and terrorist support, the U.S. should launch a long-term outreach effort to the Iranian people (particularly those unhappy with the current style and substance of the current government's rule). The aim here would be to undermine the Revolutionary government's demonization of the U.S., which it uses to help justify its hostile, repressive policies. Achieving this objective will require persistent effort and should start with one or more of the following modest steps:

- Ease current travel restrictions on friendly Iranians visiting the United States. Under Post-911 restrictions, Iranian dissidents and goodwill sports teams visiting the U.S. must be fingerprinted and photographed. In 2001, the Bush Administration allowed a wrestling team to enter the U.S. without fingerprinting. This was duly noted and appreciated. A way to make this outcome more likely and predictable is needed for desirable Iranian

- visitors. In addition, the U.S. should sponsor visits to the U.S. from Iranian journalists, prominent Iranian women, and Shia clergy.
- Provide logistical support for the direct broadcast of dissidents' messages into Iran. Given the recent Cuban jamming of broadcasts from Los Angeles, the U.S. government should make available alternative secure means for these groups to reach their audiences. And it should provide material for use by private broadcasters and extend and expand the Voice of America television broadcasts in Persian, which have had difficulty securing stable funding.
 - Make free instruction opportunities available over the internet. The Iranian government has had difficulty controlling the public's use of the internet to access Western sites and to communicate internationally. The U.S. and its friends should exploit this by offering the Iranian public a wide variety of internet educational courses tailored to their needs and desire for self-improvement. These internet courses should be offered free of cost from accredited recognized educational institutions and should lead to degrees to the extent possible.
 - Expand disaster relief as required. This would not require a change in U.S. policy, only a more active effort to implement and properly publicize it.
 - Provide counter-narcotic assistance. The U.S. already is trying to stem the flow of Afghani drugs (the key source of Iranian drug users). It should augment these efforts and publicize what it has accomplished there. The UN Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has an office in Tehran and is working to help reduce drug sales and use in Iran. Section 307 of the U. S. Foreign Assistance Act, however, prevents Iran from benefiting from U.S. contributions to international organizations. This prohibition has been waived for Iran in the cases of the IAEA and UNICEF. The President has not yet waived it for UNODC, though. This should be reviewed.
 - Public health and health care assistance. Over 20,000 Iranians have contracted HIV/AIDs mostly as a result of narcotics use. To address this growing problem, the U.S. could facilitate public health professionals' travel to Iran to assist in current World Health Organization (WHO) efforts to control this virus in Iran. More generally, the U.S. could expand its public health professional exchanges with Iran and work with local hospitals and doctors to establish the kind of computer-based public health monitoring systems currently being installed at very low costs in the U.S. and in NATO nations.

These efforts, which serve a number of political purposes (including reaching out to the possible future leaders of Iran) should be continued even if they fail to get the current government to reconsider its nuclear power program and support of terrorism. That said, if the rulers in Tehran fail to have a change of heart on these issues, the U.S. and its friends must be prepared for a much longer competition to turn Iran around. This longer competition would necessarily involve shoring up U.S. and allied security relations with Iran's neighbors (to limit the harm to

regional and international security that Iranian nuclear threats might otherwise pose) and undermining Iran's confidence in the wisdom of its current policies.

3. If Iran continues to pursue worrisome nuclear activities, ramp up U.S. and allied military regional capabilities both to neutralize the Iranian threat and forestall further proliferation. The United States and the military coalition in Iraq already must guarantee Iraq's security. Many of these same countries are also cooperating in efforts under the Proliferation Security Initiative to interdict nuclear weapons-related goods from reaching or leaving countries like Iran. Beyond this, the coalition needs to consult with the Gulf Coordination Council states, Jordan, Turkey, Israel, and Egypt about their military plans for coping with a militant, nuclear (or near-nuclear) Iran. Certainly, Iran must understand that if it persists in developing its nuclear weapons option, it will face security costs and risks that would outweigh the possible value of acquiring nuclear weapons. At a minimum, plans should be made now on how additional military cooperation with Iran's neighbors (including intelligence sharing, missile defense cooperation, joint training, etc., base sharing agreements) might best counter the threat and what new security arrangements, if any, would be appropriate. The general aim of these efforts should be to give Iran a choice between being outside of these arrangements (and a key reason for their establishment) or becoming an equal member by dropping its terrorist ties and becoming nonnuclear. Detailing what kind of security cooperation is desirable and clarifying the merits of overt and covert military action will be the focus of NPEC's follow-on analysis to be completed next spring.