

# American

## NEWS & VIEWS

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## U.S. Not Convinced by Iranian Nuclear Arrangement

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.  
Staff Writer

Washington — The United States will continue to work with its partners and the U.N. Security Council to convince the Iranian regime that it must show its willingness to live up to international obligations and forgo a nuclear weapons development program, White House press secretary Robert Gibbs says.

The Iranian regime announced May 17 that it has agreed to an arrangement negotiated by Turkey and Brazil to ship 1,200 kilograms (2,640 pounds) of low-enriched uranium to Turkey, where it would be stored. In exchange, after one year, Iran would have the right to receive about 120.2 kilograms (265 pounds) of material enriched to 20 percent from Russia and France.

“Given Iran’s repeated failure to live up to its own commitments and the need to address fundamental issues related to Iran’s nuclear program, the United States and international community continue to have serious concerns,” Gibbs said May 17 in a written statement to the news media.

Before the international community can consider the Tehran proposal, it must be sent to the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna for evaluation, Gibbs said. It is unlikely the IAEA would issue a statement until after it has received a joint declaration from Tehran.

“While it would be a positive step for Iran to transfer low-enriched uranium off of its soil as it agreed to do last October, Iran said today that it would continue its 20 percent enrichment, which is a direct violation of U.N. Security Council resolutions,” Gibbs said.

“Furthermore, the joint declaration issued in Tehran is vague about Iran’s willingness to meet with the P5+1 countries to address international concerns about its nuclear program, as it also agreed to do last October,” Gibbs added. The P5+1 countries include the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council — China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States — plus Germany.

Iranian officials have claimed that the enriched uranium would be used for peaceful purposes, including a medical research reactor in Tehran. It is not clear why continuing to enrich uranium in Iran would be necessary under the arrangement agreed to May 17.

The United States and its partners in the six-nation talks with Iran have been considering a fourth set of political and economic sanctions through the Security Council,

after Iran did not comply with an October 2009 arrangement that mirrors the agreement announced May 17 in Tehran.

In the original arrangement in October, Iran agreed to ship about 1,200 kilograms of uranium to Russia, which represented about two-thirds of its total stockpile of nuclear fuel at the time. The nuclear material would be processed to 20 percent enrichment in Russia, then shipped to Paris where it could be turned into fuel rods for use in the Tehran medical reactor. That agreement, reached in Geneva, eventually collapsed under intense political pressure from within Iran.

Western officials have said that in the interim, Iran has continued to process uranium and the 1,200 kilograms no longer represents two-thirds of its stockpile, raising new concerns about the motives behind this latest agreement.

“Iran must take the steps necessary to assure the international community that its nuclear program is intended exclusively for peaceful purposes, including by complying with U.N. Security Council resolutions and cooperating fully with the IAEA,” Gibbs said. “We remain committed to a diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear program.”

## Indonesia, United States Cooperate to Improve Security

*Mutual partnership bolsters regional safety, democratic traditions*

By Andrew Malandrino  
Staff Writer

Washington — The strong tradition of U.S.-Indonesian security cooperation that was bolstered by joint humanitarian assistance following natural disasters in 2004 and 2009 took another step forward with Indonesia’s recent decision to pursue ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

The United States is grateful to President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and the Indonesian government for “responsible leadership in the global effort to reinforce the nuclear nonproliferation regime,” President Obama said in a May 4 statement praising Indonesia’s announcement. Indonesia’s action is the most recent demonstration of the two nations’ shared vision for a peaceful, prosperous, democratic world.

After a 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, U.S. Navy vessels arrived within days to assist in rescue and recovery efforts. In the weeks and months that followed, U.S.-Indonesian military cooperation was vital for transporting relief supplies and aid workers to remote parts of the

enormous area affected by the tsunami.

More recently, U.S. Navy Rear Admiral Richard Landolt arrived in Padang, Indonesia, shortly after the September 30, 2009, earthquake. Working closely with Indonesian armed forces, Landolt led U.S. military relief efforts. The U.S. humanitarian assistance and survey team coordinated medical support, civil engineering and supply needs with the Indonesian government, nongovernmental organizations and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

Those humanitarian partnerships gave rise to several important security relationships.

In March, members of the U.S. Air Force's technical coordination groups inspected and repaired portions of Indonesia's fleet of U.S.-made fighter and cargo aircraft. Indonesian-operated C-130 transport planes, capable of carrying 19,000 kilograms (42,000 pounds), were vital for ferrying disaster relief supplies to isolated parts of the country.

In May, the Indonesian government and the U.S. Army co-hosted in Jakarta, Indonesia, the 20th Asia Pacific Military Medicine Conference. The annual gathering featured discussions on humanitarian relief deployments, medical administration, triage and casualty evacuation, and methods to combat infectious diseases.

The United States and Indonesia also share a strong interest in improving maritime security and fighting trafficking in persons.

Under the Global Train and Equip Program, the United States from 2006 to 2009 provided Indonesia with more than \$47 million to fight smuggling, piracy and trafficking. This Department of Defense program sponsored the installation of several radar systems to improve maritime security throughout the archipelago, particularly in the Malacca and Makassar straits. According to the International Maritime Bureau, incidents of maritime crime in Indonesian waters decreased 77 percent from 2003 to 2008.

Working with Indonesians to fight human trafficking, the U.S. departments of State and Labor in 2008 and 2009 funded more than \$6 million in projects to prevent trafficking, protect victims and prosecute traffickers in Indonesia.

As security partners, the United States and Indonesia joined Thailand, Japan, South Korea and Singapore for the Cobra Gold military exercise in February. Cobra Gold is the largest multinational military exercise in the world. Its joint training programs include command post exercises, civil engineering projects and field exercises.

In 2009, the U.S. and Indonesian militaries co-hosted the Garuda Shield multilateral military exercise in Bandung, Indonesia. This training program focused on peace support operations and included more than 1,000 soldiers and marines from nine countries. The co-director of the exercise, U.S. Major General Vernon Miyagi, praised Indonesia for taking "a lead role in supporting peacekeeping worldwide."

Joint military exercises such as these are part of the close training and counterterrorism relationship that the United States and Indonesia share. U.S.-Indonesian counterterrorism cooperation has been especially strong since the Bali bombings of October 2002, and the United States has "very good cooperation with the Indonesian government on counterterrorism issues," said Jeff Bader March 15. Bader is the senior director for Asian affairs at the National Security Council.

One exception is Kopassus, the special forces unit of the Indonesia army. That unit, according to the State Department's 2003 human rights report, in the past has "committed many serious human rights violations." For more than a decade, U.S. federal law has prohibited U.S. assistance to other nations' security forces that engage in human rights violations and do not punish the individuals responsible for those acts.

The United States ceased cooperation with Kopassus in 1998, and the legacy of violations remains unresolved.

In 2005, the United States lifted restrictions on several military aid programs for Indonesia: the international military education and training program, the foreign military financing program, and the foreign military sales program. U.S. officials have said the administration is exploring the possibility of re-engaging with Kopassus, provided that such re-engagement complies with U.S. law and is in accordance with U.S. values and interests.

These issues of military cooperation are the topic of annual Indonesia-U.S. strategic dialogues, begun in 2001. Top officials from both countries' defense departments attend the meetings. In addition to their common security interests, Indonesia and the United States are two of the world's largest democracies and share many democratic values, including civilian leadership of the military.

#### PARTNERS FOR DEMOCRACY

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton visited Indonesia in February 2009 as part of her first overseas trip as secretary. During a discussion with Indonesian journalists, she emphasized that democracy in the United States brings people together to solve shared problems.

Clinton used the example of herself and President Obama. They were competitors for their party's presidential nomination in 2008 who later came together to work for the same goal.

To support democracy in Indonesia, USAID began in 2009 a four-year, \$62 million local governance and support program. The program provides support and training for more than 77,000 participants in effective and accountable local governance.

During her December 14, 2009, address on human rights, Clinton called Indonesia's democratic system "dynamic democracy that is Islamic and secular."

In the February 2009 discussion with journalists, Clinton praised democratic progress in Indonesia and described her role in bringing that message back to the people of the United States:

"Those who doubt that Islam and democracy and modernity and women's rights can all coexist should come to Indonesia. So I can help bring that message to my own country, because many people don't know that about Indonesia, and to create better understanding and communication, and to encourage more Americans to travel to Indonesia, to invest in Indonesia, to work in Indonesia, just all kinds of opportunities that I think we can pursue."

### **A Year Later, Muslims Hail Obama's Cairo Pledge of Cooperation**

*But many say more attention needed on critical policy areas*

By Ralph Dannheisser  
Special Correspondent

Washington — Speakers at a daylong Washington conference on Islam and democracy broadly agreed with Obama administration representatives that the president's June 2009 speech in Cairo offered a historic opening to Muslim communities, but virtually all of them said that action is still needed in policy areas they consider critical.

Most cited foreign policy matters as the key divisive issues, calling for swift U.S. disengagement in Iraq and Afghanistan and, most consistently of all, for increased pressure leading to a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that will relieve what several called the suffering of the Palestinians.

They made their points April 28 at the 11th annual conference of the Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy (CSID), a Washington-based group that describes itself as "dedicated to the study and promotion of Islamic and democratic reforms in the Muslim world."

Farah Pandith, whose job as the State Department's special representative to Muslim communities was established just weeks after Obama's Cairo speech, presented the administration's view by asserting that, "frankly, everything" about U.S.-Muslim relations had changed in the aftermath of the president's promise of "a new beginning ... based on mutual interest and mutual respect."

"There is an absolutely new frame, there is a new tone, there is a new lexicon, there is a new way of looking at things, there is a new energy and there is a new responsibility that is coming from Washington," Pandith said.

But she anticipated the tenor of the conference itself when she reported: "Israel-Palestine is the most important thing that comes up in every conversation with any group of Muslims that I meet with. The issue of Iraq and Afghanistan also is on the minds of many that I speak to around the world." She assured her audience of "the dedication of the president and the secretary of state" to resolving the Israeli-Palestinian issue.

CSID President Radwan Masmoudi foreshadowed the tone taken by many speakers in his opening remarks at the conference, titled "U.S. Relations with the Muslim World: One Year After Cairo." The "hope and excitement in the Islamic world" that greeted Obama's speech "began to turn into disappointment as people realized that turning promises into reality is not always easy or possible," Masmoudi said.

While Masmoudi did not offer specifics, political pollster Steven Kull reported that while Muslims have a better opinion of the United States since Obama became president, "there still is quite a lot of anger" toward the country and its policies, notably on Iraq and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

"The United States needs to diffuse [soften] the image that it is coercively dominating the Muslim world" and must "trust the Muslim people with democracy," Kull said.

Speakers based in Muslim-majority countries both in and outside the Middle East repeatedly voiced the same points.

An example: Chloe Berwind-Dart, director-general of the Nigerian development group the Cherish Foundation, said Nigerians she interviewed found the Cairo speech to be "aspirational, in no way an action plan," and saw "a perceived gap between the ideals of the United States and the way it actually acts in the world." Israel-Palestine will "continue to be a huge point of tension" until "a two-state solution with self-determination for everyone involved" is achieved, she said.

Pandith, while acknowledging the problems, focused in her upbeat speech largely on wide-ranging changes in approach under the Obama presidency.

She stressed that the State Department has dropped the outdated method of engaging with Muslims largely through its Near East bureau. "It's now a cohesive effort across every regional bureau," she said. "There are more Muslims that live outside the Middle East than in. This means that every one of our embassies around the world is engaging, whether in Brazil or Kazakhstan or Nigeria or Malaysia."

And, she said, the administration is focusing substantial efforts on young people — those she termed "the Facebook generation" — and using social networking tools to do it. "That demographic is unbelievably important to us. Forty-five percent of the world's population is under the age of 30, and in many Muslim communities around the world that percentage is far higher," Pandith said.

Rashad Hussain, U.S. special envoy to the Organization of the Islamic Conference, similarly focused on the positive in his concluding keynote address. He stressed the administration's "comprehensive vision" for outreach extending beyond merely dealing with extremism and political conflicts — outreach ranging from a recent entrepreneurship conference to ongoing efforts at interfaith dialogue.

Through all these approaches, he said, "we've started to knock down that sense of 'otherization'" — a feeling of isolation from U.S. society on the part of Muslim communities. That echoed Pandith's observation that, under Obama's cooperative vision, the United States has dropped an "us and them" approach to relations with Muslim communities.

Instead, she said, "there is a 'we.' There is a partnership."

## U.S., China Set 2011 for More Human Rights Talks

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.  
Staff Writer

Washington — Senior U.S. and Chinese officials have agreed to continue talks on human rights issues next year in China and to begin exchanges of legal experts, Assistant Secretary of State Michael Posner says.

The officials met in Washington May 13-14 for talks, the first since 2008, on a range of human rights issues that included religious freedom, labor rights, freedom of expression, rule of law, racial discrimination and multilateral cooperation, Posner said May 14 at a news

briefing.

"The discussions we had were candid and constructive, including a range of areas where we disagree," Posner said. "We also agreed to a next round of this dialogue to be held in China in 2011, and we are discussing further expert discussions both on religious freedom issues and labor."

Posner, the assistant secretary of state for democracy, human rights and labor, said it is critically important for human rights issues to be part of broader U.S. engagement with China. Posner will participate in the second round of the U.S.-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue in Beijing May 24-25 in what is described as a "whole of government" approach to the bilateral relationship.

The two days of Washington talks were not one-sided: China raised human rights issues of its own on the U.S. treatment of Muslim Americans, immigration and racial discrimination. Talks also included food safety and labor inspections. Posner said the talks included discussions about individual cases such as Liu Xiaobo, a Chinese author-dissident serving an 11-year prison term on charges of subversion, and Gao Zhisheng, a Chinese human rights lawyer.

"We talked about a large number of cases, and those cases are in very different places," Posner said. "We genuinely are committed and spent time discussing very specific cases and very specific concerns in the areas where our disagreements are most profound."

The Chinese raised questions about Arizona's new state law authorizing law enforcement officers to question a person's immigration status if there is a suspicion that person might be in the United States illegally. Posner said that it was discussed "early and often" in their talks and was viewed by the Chinese as "a troubling trend in our society."

"I view this as laying a foundation for me and Director-General [for International Organizations] Chen [Xu] to continue to have conversations, and for these to become a more regular pattern so that we can exchange ideas and concerns, and look for ways to cooperate," Posner said. "There is a value in having a conversation, direct conversation, between the two governments."

"In two days, we're not going to change major policies or major points of view," he added. "But we laid a foundation to continue those discussions, and we will continue them."

During the talks the United States was also represented by officials from the White House, the departments of

Commerce, Homeland Security, Justice and Labor, the U.S. Trade Representative's office, and the Internal Revenue Service, Posner said. The Chinese brought representatives from nine agencies for the talks.

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