

# American

## NEWS & VIEWS

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## Iran Nuclear Talks Open, Detailed

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr. | Staff Writer |  
17 October 2013

Washington — The White House says an Iranian proposal regarding its nuclear development program presented during two days of lengthy diplomatic talks in Geneva showed a level of seriousness and substance that had not been seen before.

At a press briefing October 16, White House spokesman Jay Carney told journalists he would not discuss the technical conversations or go into specifics of the Iranian proposal, but did emphasize that a breakthrough overnight should not be expected. “These are complicated issues, they’re technical issues, and as the president has said, the history of mistrust is very deep,” Carney said.

“The onus remains on Iran to come into compliance with its international obligations, and any deal must prove to the international community that Iran’s program will be used for exclusively peaceful purposes,” Carney added.

At issue is Iran’s uranium enrichment program, which the international community has long believed was part of a larger program for the manufacture of nuclear weapons. Iranian officials have claimed that the uranium enrichment processing has been for use in a medical research reactor near Tehran and for electric energy generation. As a consequence of this impasse, the United Nations, the United States and the international community have imposed a series of political and stringent international economic sanctions against Iran.

Negotiators from the United States, Britain, China, France, Germany and Russia met for two days in Geneva, October 15–16, with an Iranian delegation led by Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif. Catherine Ashton, the European Union’s high representative for foreign affairs and security policy, led the talks and said it was a “very intensive and, I think, a very important meeting,” according to news reports.

Carney told journalists that the six nations remain united on holding Iran to its international obligations, and added that everyone at the meeting agreed to resume the talks in Geneva November 7–8. There will also be an experts’ meeting with the six nations and Iranians before that round of talks that will include nuclear, scientific and sanctions experts.

At a separate background briefing in Geneva October 16, a senior U.S. official said the discussions were serious and substantive. President Obama welcomed efforts by Iranian President Hassan Rouhani at the opening of the U.N. General Assembly in September in New York to

renew the six-nation talks and reach an accord on inspections by monitors from the International Atomic Energy Agency of Iran’s nuclear development program.

“We had detailed technical discussions at a level we have not had before. And we discussed concrete steps and actions that are necessary for Iran to address the international community’s concerns about its nuclear program,” the U.S. official said.

The senior U.S. official said that the Iranians addressed what they saw as the objective, what should be in a final step and what they might do as a first step. It is a framework that the six nations have used for some time in such discussions.

“The issues were indeed complex, technical and difficult; and although we might put all of the issues on the table and begin to have those technical discussions that have so evaded us in the past, it would be highly unlikely for an agreement to come out of these two days,” the official said. “That is indeed the case.”

The rapid meeting schedule that resumes in November with the experts’ meeting wedged between the two senior officials’ meetings is an effort to ensure that the pace of the work proceeds quickly but cautiously, the official told journalists.

Obama spoke with President Rouhani by telephone September 27, the first direct contact between an American and an Iranian president in 34 years, in an effort to reach agreement over Iran’s secretive nuclear development program and to restart the stalled talks. “I reiterated to President Rouhani what I said in New York. While there will surely be important obstacles to moving forward, and success is by no means guaranteed, I believe we can reach a comprehensive solution,” Obama said.

## Indonesia Makes Fishing Sustainable with U.S. Support

By Charlene Porter | Staff Writer | 17 October 2013

Washington — The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and a U.S.-based private company are working with Indonesia’s government and industry to ensure that irreplaceable ocean resources remain abundant to support future generations.

Indonesia’s marine environment provides a livelihood for 65 million people and is of important cultural and spiritual value to hundreds of millions. That degree of interdependence with the oceans makes the Pacific archipelago the largest “blue economy” in the world, according to USAID background documents.

Climate change, unsustainable fishing practices,

pollution, mining discharges and poor watershed management all threaten the long-term viability of Indonesia's marine resources, however. The USAID-backed Fisheries Improvement Project (FIP) works on overcoming those problems and providing sustainable fisheries to enhance living conditions for fishing communities.

USAID, Anova Food LLC, the nonprofit Fishing and Living group and the World Wildlife Fund are working with the Indonesian Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF), the nation's fishing communities and fishermen themselves to achieve these goals.

"You can't manage what you don't measure," is an old motto of business, and the same principle has been a key tool in environmental management for more than 20 years. That's the strategy FIP applied when the project launched in November 2012, training "enumerators," people who count the catch that the boats bring to port each day.

How big is the overall catch? How big are individual creatures in the catch? What species are they? MMAF can build these day-to-day observations into a body of data that will reveal if the fish population is being exploited or diminished. That information provides guidance for creation of "harvest control rules," which allow better management of the resources. Harvest rules regulate when waters must be closed or limited to fishing, for instance, so diminished stocks may recover.

Harvest control rules aim to find just the right balance of policies that will keep the fish stock in good health while still ensuring profitability in the fishery. The USAID-Indonesian fishing project also works to ensure that fishing boats are licensed so managers will know how many people are tapping the resources. The project is also conducting community awareness programs so that fishing villages understand what must be done today to preserve resources for the future.

Anova Food LLC buys the catch, as a company that wants to provide a market for fishermen bringing in a catch with certified sustainable methods. The company, in turn, is able to serve discerning buyers who want to assure a growing population of environmentally conscious consumers that their fish was harvested in a responsible manner.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry has spoken forcefully about the need to introduce greater sustainability into policymaking at many levels. During a trip to a number of Asian nations, Kerry made a stop at an Indonesian port October 6 to see how the FIP project is progressing.

"If there's too much money chasing too few fish, and we

don't have sustainable practices, then we will obviously inherit crises beyond recognition," Kerry said.

As a native of Massachusetts, the Bay State, Kerry has seen a fishing community in crisis. "In New England, particularly, we saw our cod industry greatly hurt in the last years as the stocks collapsed," Kerry said, adding that research is the best way to better understand how to preserve fisheries for the future.

In 2011, the U.S. Department of State recognized Anova's work in Indonesia with the Award for Corporate Excellence.

### **Ghana, U.S. Combat Malnutrition with New Center**

By Jennifer Aldridge | U.S. Africa Command |  
17 October 2013

*This article was originally published on the U.S. Africa Command website on October 9.*

Accra, Ghana – Ghana and the United States are teaming up to ease hunger in the West Africa nation.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers awarded a contract September 12 to build a \$489,700 nutritional rehabilitation center in Nkwanta. The project, a joint effort by U.S. Africa Command, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the U.S. Embassy and the Ghanaian Ministry of Health, was designed to improve the health and prosperity of children in the Volta region.

Despite the need, there is no specific center for malnourished children in the area, said Linda Smittle, a Peace Corps Ghana volunteer.

"Right now, there is about 16 percent malnutrition with 3 percent being severely malnourished in the district," Smittle said.

Worldwide, malnutrition is responsible for nearly half the deaths of children under 5, according to the 2013 Lancet Series on Maternal and Child Nutrition. In Ghana, there are two causes of malnutrition. The first is simply not enough calories consumed for calories expended.

The other trigger is lack of protein. Protein is necessary for key body functions, including muscle development and maintenance. Children lacking protein may appear to have swollen or bloated stomachs.

The Ghanaian government, with U.S. assistance, is investing in proven interventions to reduce malnutrition in the country – including the construction of the Nkwanta Nutritional Rehab Center. The center will be equipped with seven bedrooms each sized for five single beds, a training room, nurses' station, cooking and

bathroom facilities, and a courtyard. The project is an addition to the existing district hospital complex and will complement the existing buildings' architectural character and finishes.

The center's layout promotes interaction between parents — mainly mothers — and staff and among parents, Smittle said.

"They will have a place to go, a special place with a family-like setting, where everyone can feel at home and learn to take care of their children," she said. "The center will rehabilitate the children so they get stronger and healthier. It will also teach the mothers to keep them strong and healthy."

The goal of the facility, according to Kornell Rancy of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, is to guarantee basic quality of life for children in the Volta region.

"By ensuring parents understand how to glean the most nutrition out of their food supplies and by alleviating malnutrition in identified cases, this center will ensure that the child population can thrive, attend school and become productive community members," Rancy said.

The new center will treat up to 300 patients per year, according to hospital officials. Malnourished children will stay a week or two to gain strength and reach sustainable nutrition levels so they can go about a healthy life, Smittle said.

"The old facility, a pediatric ward in the hospital, is designed to treat sick children rather than provide long-term nourishment and care," she said. "Right now, kids don't come. Once people know there is a place to go and they see it as a life-giving place, they will use it."

The concept is to treat malnourished children, but also and perhaps more importantly, educate the families involved about simple practices to boost health. Eventually, once enough patients and families receive care at the center, prevention measures will spread throughout the three-district community, Smittle said.

"We really want them to learn to take better care of not only the child who is the target, but all of the children in their family," she said. "They will learn from each other, not only experts, and word will spread that 'Oh, I fed my baby this,' or 'If I wash my hands every time before feeding, my baby doesn't get sick.'"

The center is expected to be complete in fall 2014.

The contractor CNaf-SET will provide the labor, equipment, materials and other services to deliver the project. With plenty of experience building in Africa —

seven completed schools in Benin and one in Togo — the company looks forward to executing this project, said Nuri Gultepe, a CNaf-SET general manager.

"We experience lots of happiness and pride since education and health are very crucial to the life of human beings," he said. "Developed societies have solved health and education matters. In other words, it is not possible for Africa to develop without improving health care and education."

The physical construction under way in Nkwanta is the foundation for something greater. Combating malnutrition is a challenging task, but the nutritional center will provide the framework for a stronger, healthier Ghanaian youth population, Smittle said.

"Think of a child who may be dying: If they don't receive services, he or she may pass away," she said. "Here, they will not only get immediate nutrition, but the knowledge to know how to keep going in the right direction. That's exciting, that's changing lives."

### **Secretary Kerry Says U.S. Seeks Enduring Partnership with Afghanistan**

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr. | Staff Writer |  
15 October 2013

Washington — Secretary of State John Kerry says he went to Afghanistan to conduct long-range talks with President Hamid Karzai over a security agreement that will support the nation after the NATO-led security mission ends in 2014 and that will create an enduring partnership that respects Afghanistan's sovereignty and the safety of the Afghan people.

Kerry and a team of U.S. diplomats met with Karzai and Afghan leaders beginning late October 11 and going well into October 12 in Kabul to resolve issues surrounding a bilateral security agreement that would allow an American military presence in Afghanistan after the NATO mission concludes at the end of 2014. A tentative security agreement was reached after lengthy meetings between the secretary and the president, but it now goes before the Afghan Loya Jirga and Afghan parliament for final consideration.

At a joint press briefing October 12, Karzai told journalists that after a long discussion and exchange of concerns and ideas he and Kerry reached agreement in crucial areas: the United States will not conduct counterterrorism operations by itself but with Afghan forces, and the United States is providing a written guarantee for the safety of the Afghan people from home invasion and a clear commitment to respect and honor the nation's sovereignty.

"We respect completely, and President Obama supports and is committed to the principles that the president of Afghanistan has laid out in order to protect the people of Afghanistan," Kerry said alongside Karzai at the press availability.

"President Obama wants the United States to work in partnership with Afghanistan," he said. "And nothing would please us more or serve American interests more than to see an Afghanistan free and independent, and without the need for support from America or any other country."

Kerry said that the United States seeks an enduring partnership in the years ahead, providing that it wins the approval of the Afghan people through the Loya Jirga, a national consultative assembly of tribal elders, and the Afghan parliament, which would approve the final security agreement. Beginning after 2014, a modest American military presence will be engaged in training, assisting, advising and equipping Afghan national security forces, who will defend their country and will participate in counterterrorism operations, he added.

"We will not be conducting combat operations," Kerry said.

Kerry said the question of jurisdiction over U.S. forces that remain in the country after 2014 remains a key element that needs support from the Loya Jirga, noting, "There is no immunity in this agreement." In all U.S. status of forces agreements with other nations, American military personnel are subject to the jurisdiction of U.S. military courts, but there is no immunity.

If an American who is part of any expeditionary force serving in Afghanistan under an approved security agreement were to violate any law, as has happened in the past, the individual would be prosecuted to the full measure of U.S. military law, and any perpetrator of any incident or crime will be punished, Kerry said.

"Wherever our forces are found, they operate under the same standard," Kerry said.

Kerry added that the question of jurisdiction is an appropriate one for Karzai to submit to the Loya Jirga, and to the parliament. "We have the highest confidence that the people of Afghanistan will see the benefits that exist in this agreement," he said. But without resolution of the jurisdiction issue, Kerry said, there cannot be a bilateral security agreement.

Currently there are an estimated 87,000 international forces in Afghanistan, which include approximately 52,000 American personnel. By February 2014 that number will be reduced by half, and all foreign combat

forces will be redeployed by the end of 2014. The United States has proposed that a modest support force remain to train, advise, assist and equip Afghan forces.

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