



Iranians for Peace
Iranian Peace Seekers & Allies

President Barack H. Obama
The White House

Embargoed Until
January 28, 2009

Dear Mr. President,

Your election as the President of the United States of America has opened a new and promising chapter in the history of the USA and created a strong wave of enthusiasm and hope across the world.

We, members of the “Iranians for Peace” (IFP), a network of individuals and associations inside and outside Iran, are dedicated to promoting a better understanding of Iranian culture and society. Exploring the current nuclear crisis, with the objective of enabling both sides to envision a solution, has been one of our goals. We are advocating for a solution that is not imposed by force, by sanctions or by military intervention leading to frustration, humiliation and hatred but one that pays due regard to the dignity, pride and aspirations of the Iranian people. Such a solution must respect the sovereignty, the security and the national interests of Iran so that it can last, be productive in the complicated political situation of the Middle East and contribute to the cause of peace and prosperity in the region. Last but not the least, this must be a solution based on actual facts and not mere suspicion, and based on the spirit and the letter of the international treaties ensuring fairness of treatment in comparison to cases of other countries.

A solution of this kind may seem too hard and cumbersome to achieve, but it is commensurate with the expectations that your election has created. Yes, you can do it.

Iran’s nuclear program is currently under the “Safeguards Agreement” and inspections of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) within the framework of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT). But, because of the one-dimensional policies of the US and some of its European allies, Iran has been denied the cooperation mandated by the NPT. Left to their own devices, Iranians have to work in isolation, paving the way for misunderstanding and suspicion.

We think a proper solution can be reached only by initiating a direct dialogue with the Iranian authorities. If carried out in good faith from both sides, this dialogue can lead to political settlement of various issues inhibiting US-Iran relations. We therefore welcome your statement about Iran on January 27 in which you said: **"It is important for us to be willing to talk to Iran, to express very clearly where our differences are, but (also) where there are potential avenues for progress."**



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We believe that a definitive and lasting solution of the crisis should, of necessity, include the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone for ALL the countries in the Middle East, as voted for by the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency. The recent turmoil in Gaza and the tragic death of large numbers of innocent civilians, indiscriminate devastation and sufferings of the Palestinian people has illustrated once more, how volatile the situation is in the Middle East. The existence of nuclear weapons in that region may lead to a catastrophic scenario.

Furthermore, steps should be taken to bring the countries that have not joined the NPT to adhere to this treaty and submit all their nuclear activities to the safeguard system of the IAEA, in order to remove the de facto discrimination that has resulted regarding the non-proliferation objectives. Short of achieving this, the NPT would lose its purpose and, as a consequence, would be less and less respected by those countries that have joined the treaty.

Finally, we must concede that the possession of nuclear weapons by a number of countries is a potential threat to the humanity as a whole. If the NPT is to be respected by all nations in good faith, the nuclear weapon countries should engage, with determination, in the process of implementing their commitments under the article VI of the NPT. This would lead to total nuclear disarmament to the benefit of future generations bound to live on this planet.

The way the Iranian nuclear issue is being handled at present is unfair, inefficient and counter-productive. Your administration will be in a propitious position to change the course of action and formulate a solution worthy of the values you are representing.

Hoping that this letter will receive your special attention, we remain,
Respectfully yours,

Akbar Etemad
Co-chair

Fatemeh Keshavarz
Co-chair