



PEACE CORPS
PCIA IRAN ASSOCIATION

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The Cyrus Cylinder منشور استوانه کوروش or Cyrus Charter منشور کوروش was discovered under the foundation of a Babylonian palace in 1879, making it perhaps the oldest time capsule on record. It commemorates Cyrus' victory over Babylonia in 539 BC and sets out the rights of subjects in his expanding empire. It is often commemorated as the oldest charter of human rights in the world.

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Note from the Editor: Biden Team Agenda

By Paul Barker, Bidokht, Shiraz, Tehran 1971-76

This week, as Biden's team sets about to rechart the directions of US foreign policy in the Middle East, it can [depend heavily on European members of the JCPOA](#) to help navigate a path to US and Iranian return to compliance with the nuclear deal and the [UN to provide the structure and precedent](#) for addressing broader security concerns in the Persian Gulf.

Articles below by John Limbert, Brad Hanson, Donna Shalala and Carolyn Yale offer suggestions for how he can most successfully pursue an ambitious agenda, particularly with regard to resetting US relations with Iran.

Iranian presidential elections, scheduled for June, usually have higher turnout than US elections. Trump's 'maximum pressure' approach to Iran have helped the electoral prospects of hardliners damage the prospects of moderates who had tried to open Iran to more normal relations with the outside world. Signals to be sent by the Biden team in the weeks ahead may play a significant role in determining what kind of Iranian regime it will be dealing with for the coming four years.

America's recent electoral chaos has weakened its international reputation as a beacon of democracy, and it has underscored the fact that Iran is not the only country needing constraints on its nuclear program. Amidst concerns for President Trump's stability, some experts are stressing the need to revise and update America's nuclear launch policy to include [No First Use and Shared Authority](#).

What Trump has in common with the Ayatollah Khomeini, 2021/1/10

By John Limbert, Sanandaj 1964-66

Wednesday's disgraceful spectacle at the United States Capitol resurrected chilling memories for me. Forty-one years ago, on Nov. 4, 1979, I and my colleagues at the American Embassy in Tehran faced a mob that, like the one on Wednesday, invaded a supposedly sacrosanct compound and overwhelmed inadequate security — all with encouragement from their nation's supreme leader.

For me, the similarities in the two events were unnerving. In the summer and fall of 1979, Iran's leader — Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini — had incited his followers to act against the United States, blaming us for all Iranians' problems. His vitriol only increased after President Carter — against his own better judgment — allowed the deposed shah of Iran to enter the United States for medical treatment.

Despite the obvious dangers, our embassy had only minimal defense against a mob attack. When that attack came, Khomeini not only did not condemn it, he praised the mob as agents of "a second revolution, greater than the first," referring to the Islamic Revolution that had overthrown the Iranian monarchy nine months earlier. At that time only the cool heads of our embassy's young Marine Security Guards prevented a bloodbath. Their superb training and discipline saved our lives.

On Wednesday, I again witnessed a mob storming the gates of a purportedly inviolable building. I again witnessed failure to provide timely assistance. When I heard statements that "the National Guard is on the way" and "the Maryland and Virginia state police are coming," I couldn't help recalling the empty promises we heard from Iranian authorities — that help would arrive soon. Help finally did arrive at the Capitol, but not before multiple deaths and injuries, and too late to prevent the mob from running amok through our nation's beloved and beautiful "people's House," with some even posing for pictures in the vice president's chair in the Senate.

In Tehran, however, the promised help never arrived. Fourteen months later, when our ordeal finally ended, we were still waiting for it.

I even heard the same after-the-fact criticisms: "We should have known." "We could see it coming." "Why did no one foresee such an obvious threat?" "Why did no one prepare for it?"

In both cases, two factors led to these failures: the very outrageousness of the attack and the fact that such events had happened so rarely. An armed group had attacked the U.S. Embassy in Tehran nine months earlier, in February 1979, but at that time the Iranian authorities had reacted quickly to clear the compound. But no similar event in Tehran had occurred since 1829, when a mob stormed the Russian Embassy and murdered almost all of the Russian staff, including the ambassador. The last attack on the U.S. Capitol was in 1814, when the British troops occupied and burned Washington during the War of 1812.

In Tehran, we were accustomed to noisy anti-American demonstrations. In Washington, the police were expecting a noisy pro-Trump demonstration near the Capitol. What they (and we) were not expecting was a mob that would storm the building. No similar event had occurred in Washington for 207 years. In Tehran, no one expected that the country's ruler would give his personal endorsement to the occupation of a foreign embassy. Such outrageous things simply did not happen. Even the bloody 1829 attack on the Russian Embassy was not condoned by the Iranian authorities.

In both Tehran and Washington, the power to foresee was not the power to prevent. President Trump and his skills were obviously inflaming his followers with their incessant lies about election fraud. Despite these warning signs, the Washington mob easily brushed aside the inadequate security forces at the Capitol. Trump's hollow "go home, we love you" message to the mob did nothing to end the riot.

In the Tehran case, 40 years earlier, Carter himself foresaw the consequences of his decision to admit the ailing shah. According to the memoirs of Hamilton Jordan, his chief of staff, the president asked his advisors, "What are you going to tell me to do when our embassy is overrun and our people are taken hostage?" History has not recorded any response.

John Limbert, a retired Foreign Service officer, was among the last American diplomats to serve in Iran, where he was held hostage from 1979 to 1981. He is a former professor of Middle Eastern studies at the U.S. Naval Academy and is the author of ["Negotiating With Iran: Wrestling the Ghosts of History."](#)

Now is the Time to Do Big Things

By Rep. Donna Shalala, Mollasani 1962-64

"We may lose, and we may win. Though we will never be here again." Glenn Frey and Jackson Browne wrote those words for The Eagles hit "Take it Easy" in 1972.

I am confident that my peers and those over 50 never want to be here again. The last nine months have snatched precious time from all of us, but especially those of us with more road in the rearview mirror than ahead. We've missed the births of grandkids and the chance to hold them in our arms. We've canceled vacations, dinners, and gatherings with friends and loved ones — moments that we may never replace.

And we are the lucky ones.

The unlucky ones are missing paychecks, food in the refrigerator, and their good health — 95 percent of COVID-19 deaths in the U.S. have occurred among people who are 50 or older.

Times are tough, but there are tremendous opportunities on the horizon to tap the time, energy, skills, and experiences of millions of older Americans to help guide us through the many challenges our country is facing.

Simply stated, now is time to do big things.

There are times when you take incremental steps to improve things, and there are times when you take giant leaps. Now is the time to take a giant leap. We must improve access to

affordable quality health care for every person in this country, tackle the impending climate catastrophe with the full force of the public and private sectors, and most urgently, we must hit this virus with a hammer and finally roll out a coordinated, comprehensive national plan to vaccinate everyone and safely reopen the economy once and for all.

COVID-19 has shown us some ugly truths about our health care system and what we value as a society at large — freedom over the wellbeing of our collective society. However, the pandemic has also come with a silver lining. It has compelled us to rethink the way we deliver care through telemedicine, focus on issues of race and inequities, and recognize that climate change is intimately tied to global health and well-being. I believe it will bring about a new age of investment in America, its public health, and the way we prepare for future pandemics.

Serving in the Peace Corps in southern Iran when I was younger allowed me to learn a lot about myself, as well as culture, poverty, people and what families care about most. To this day, those lessons and stories have influenced my work in academia and government. Many of us don't realize what matters most to us until we have faced tragedy and loss. This is where the perspectives of the 50-plus community — which has lost parents and children and spouses and friends — come into play. We have learned from our losses, and we hope to let these lessons influence our responses to future crises.

I am not very different than I was a few decades ago. I have the same goals, aspirations, and frustrations. Similarly, the people in the over 50 community in America are not so different from who they were as young adults. We share the same aspirations, frustrations, and goals of all Americans, but many of us have a more acute sense of the fragility of life and our remaining time here. We have a stronger sense of how we want to spend our remaining years — however many we might have.

Glen Frey died in 2016 after suffering from colitis, pneumonia, and complications from rheumatoid arthritis and being placed in a medically induced coma. Jackson Browne announced in March that he had tested positive for COVID-19. He has since recovered.

No matter what decade of life I am in, I want to continue to be a part of social change and public policy at large. I will continue to advocate and work on issues that matter to every American, regardless of age. Great change requires decisiveness, authority, conviction, compassion, and, most importantly, the ability to set the right example. The people in the 50-plus community can be that example — by getting vaccinated, wearing masks, and practicing the things we know that keep our families and communities safer in the face of a pandemic. Our decades of experience have given us the opportunity to set these examples, and I do not take that responsibility lightly.

We know what it means to lose and what it means to win. We know that the COVID-19 pandemic will go down in history as a loss, but hopefully, with the lessons we have learned from this tragedy, we understand what matters, and we will never be here again.

Donna Shalala represented Florida's 27th District. She is former HHS secretary.

Lift U.S. sanctions that block Iran from buying COVID vaccines, 2020/1/3

By John Limbert and Bahman Baktiari

The Islamic Republic of Iran has been a recurring problem for every American administration since 1979. Seeing how previous administrations' policies failed, every new administration has wrestled with how to confront, contain, persuade or negotiate with a country that has remained constantly hostile.

This moment of a global pandemic, however, offers an unusual opportunity for cooperation. Despite their mutual hostility, the two countries today are on the same side of a war against an enemy that has killed more than [347,000 Americans](#) and more than [55,000 Iranians](#). Unofficial numbers in Iran could be [three to four times](#) as high.

Although the Biden administration and the Europeans want to resuscitate the 2015 [nuclear agreement](#), what Iran, the United States and Europe urgently need right now is a COVID deal. The raging pandemic inside Iran combined with factional jockeying for the Iranian [presidential election](#) in June have paralyzed its government.

A COVID deal would help rebuild trust for future negotiations with Iran, as well as improve U.S. relations with the European Union, which have weakened in the Trump era. Stopping the pandemic in Iran is essential to protecting Iran's neighbors, 16 countries constituting over 500 million people. Without vaccines, more Iranians will die, and coronavirus infections from Iran will spread to other countries in the region.

Iranians know [their government](#) has botched its response to the pandemic. Like the Trump administration, it publicly denied the seriousness of the virus, ignored the warnings of health officials and encouraged super-spreader events. Now Iranians — like Americans — are paying the price for those misguided policies. [In Iran, healthcare workers](#) and doctors are dying in hospitals overwhelmed with COVID patients. The people should not be punished for the actions of their government.

Legally, the shipment of medicines to Iran is not under sanctions today, but [the Trump administration](#) has made it impossible for Iran to process payments from its central bank, or receive [loans from the International Monetary Fund](#) to pay for them. These financial sanctions have deterred international banks and suppliers of medicine from participating in any financial transactions for fear of becoming subject to secondary U.S. sanctions imposed on their companies or banks.

By issuing broad licenses to medical and pharmaceutical companies and manufacturers of COVID vaccines, the U.S. can assure banks, aid organizations and insurance companies that they will not be punished for supporting humanitarian medical assistance to Iran.

Iran has “pre-purchased” 17 million doses of vaccines through Covax, [the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access Facility](#), which the World Health Organization created to ensure a more equitable distribution of vaccines. But the sanctions prevent Iran's central bank from processing the payment for these vaccines. This purchase covers less than 10% of the Iranian population. To fight the virus, Iran has requested [an emergency loan](#) from the IMF, which the Trump administration blocked. The U.S. should allow the loan to proceed.

In exchange, the Iranian government should commit to a process that guarantees transparency in the delivery of the vaccines for its population. It should provide accurate case numbers and assessments and allow organizations such as [the International Committee of the Red Cross](#) and the World Health Organization to facilitate the distribution of the vaccines inside Iran.

There is precedent for setting aside enmity to address a dire crisis together. After the December 2003 earthquake in Bam, which killed more than 20,000 Iranians, the Bush administration — while making threatening noises about sending tanks to Tehran — sent medical aid to victims. Somehow, the two sides could put aside [their distrust](#) to send and accept much-needed help for the survivors.

Today, decades of isolation, recrimination and demonization prevent us from realizing the power of cultural connections that have linked Iran and America for generations. Before the 1979 revolution in Iran, America and Iran enjoyed more than [a century of friendship](#).

If the Biden administration works out a COVID deal that facilitates shipments of vaccines to the Iranian people, it will win over the hearts and minds of millions in that country, strengthening the deep but frayed bonds of friendship between ordinary Americans and Iranians.

John W. Limbert, a former professor of Middle Eastern studies at the U.S. Naval Academy, served as the U.S. deputy assistant secretary of State for Iran and is the author of "[Negotiating with Iran: Wrestling the Ghosts of History](#)." Bahman Baktiari is the executive director of [the Baskerville Institute](#) and author of "[Parliamentary Politics in Revolutionary Iran](#)."

A Humanitarian Agenda for the Biden Administration, 2021/1/18

By Brad Hanson, Khaaf and Shiraz 1973-76

January 20 Joe Biden will take the oath of office. He and his administration will have the opportunity to implement a number of humanitarian measures by executive decree or presidential decision, NOT by requiring additional legislation. Only the longer-term budget actions require Congressional approval. These actions could send a message of good will to Iranians and the Iranian regime at a critical time. Both sides are thinking through the US' reentry to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the Iran nuclear agreement, including the lifting of US nuclear-related sanctions, and Iran's return to full compliance with its JCPOA obligations. These measures would also, over time, save lives, reduce suffering, and facilitate travel and people to people exchanges. Importantly, these measures could signal to Iran and, indeed, the world that the US is again prioritizing diplomacy to solve difficult problems.

Many of these measures relate to combatting the corona virus. The Biden administration's number one domestic priority needs to be reflected in its foreign priorities as well. Indeed, the latter reinforces the former. Global action, including in Iran, combatting the virus will increase the chances of success at home.

Day 1 of the new administration:

1. **Rescind the Trump administration's executive order – "the Muslim travel ban "** -- prohibiting entry into the US by citizens of a number of majority-Muslim countries, including Iran. Thousands of Iranians with family in the US, with interrupted studies in the US, with other legitimate reasons for visiting the US will benefit.
2. **Announce the US will reenter the World Health Organization (WHO) AND** restore full, better yet, increase US funding for the one world body responsible for tackling, organizing, and coordinating international cooperative efforts to contain and defeat the corona virus pandemic. WHO has a particularly important role to play in developing countries, including Iran. As long as Covid-19 is uncontrolled and spreading anywhere in the world, Americans will be at risk. Millions of people around the world, including Iranians, would benefit from a renewed US commitment to the WHO.

Week 1 of the new administration:

3. **Announce that the US will lift its objection to Iran's request for an International Monetary Fund (IMF) Covid-related loan.** Dozens of countries have received these emergency IMF loans directly tied to the recipient country's efforts to combat the corona virus. Iran is a member of the IMF, eligible to apply for such a loan, and indeed has done so, the first time it has requested an IMF loan since the 1960s. But the US has indicated it would use its substantial number of voting rights in the IMF to block Iran's request. Approving this IMF loan would provide much needed funding to purchase medical equipment, medicines, vaccines, etc., to directly combat the virus, as well as funding for other needs related to combatting the virus.

Tehran would take immediate notice of this important step greatly assisting Iran in combatting the virus.

4. **Create an Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) general license for all sanctioned countries, including Iran, for the import of Covid-related items, including vaccines, until the WHO declares an end to the pandemic.** Although technically there are OFAC exceptions to US sanctions for humanitarian goods, in reality, US and foreign banks, shipping companies, insurance companies, humanitarian goods manufacturers do not take advantage of them because they are very risk averse. They do not want to take the chance that they might violate US sanctions to engage in humanitarian trade with sanctioned countries. Such a general license -- if publicized and implemented quickly -- would signal to all the relevant actors that such humanitarian trade is permitted and will not be sanctioned.

Month 1 of the new administration:

5. **Signal long-term increased US support for UN specialized agencies** such as the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHRC), World Food Program (WFP), UN Development Program (UNDP), Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), UN Habitat, and others tasked with ameliorating the world's worst humanitarian crises and finding durable solutions. The US can do this in every-day diplomacy at the UN in New York, Geneva, Rome, and Nairobi, in revisions to the US federal budget for increased funding, and in advocating other nations do the same. Many of these agencies are active in Iran. Countless human beings would benefit, including Iranians, from this dramatic shift in US foreign policy.

Year 1 of the new administration:

6. **Rescind, revise, adjust OFAC sanctions against Iran prohibiting, making next to impossible, people to people exchanges** such as American and Iranian academics participating in conferences and research, sports teams and individual athletes competing, cultural and educational exchanges, etc. Once the pandemic is well under control, there will again be the desire for face-to face contact. The US should plan for that day and help facilitate people to people exchanges with Iran. Obviously, it takes two for an exchange. A more favorable US attitude toward such exchanges might elicit the same from the Iranian authorities. It might even lead to Iran taking an important humanitarian action and confidence-building measure, i.e., the release of dual national citizens, including several Iranian-Americans, held or convicted on spurious charges.

Returning to the JCPOA: No New Conditions, 2021/1/18

Carolyn Yale, Shiraz 1974-75

The Biden administration will officially take over on January 20, and with this change comes a pledge made last fall to reenter the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (Nuclear Agreement). This intent has been reinforced by nominating to the State Department and other offices individuals with diplomatic experience and knowledge of Iran and the Middle East. Some nominees, such as Wendy Sherman (proposed Deputy Secretary of State) took part in the original JCPOA negotiations. A recent letter from 150 House Democrats supports reentry "without new conditions". This last point is important: Iran has been clear that it is not open to "new conditions", which would be certain to include addressing Iran's ballistic missile program. Calling for 'new conditions' such as this long-disputed issue is more likely a ploy to undermine rather than improve the Agreement.

In a speech last December Ayatollah Khamenei said that restoring the Nuclear Agreement with US participation could be accomplished quickly, provided US sanctions are lifted. This statement bolstered the position taken by President Rouhani and contradicted conservatives in opposition. Making significant headway in reviving the JCPOA in the near term is important, as Rouhani, who cannot run again for president, may well be replaced by a conservative in the June election.

Rejoining the JCPOA will without doubt entail difficult negotiation. The JCPOA does not provide specifics on how to rejoin. Biden has offered “compliance for compliance” as a precondition for US reentry, and it will be necessary to negotiate what ‘compliance’ means. Both countries have ‘violated’ the JCPOA. The US exited the Agreement and unilaterally reinstated sanctions lifted in the Agreement. After dropping out of the Agreement, the Trump administration has imposed additional sanctions on individuals and institutions in an effort to extend the reach of impediments to banking transactions and oil exports. Unless lifted, these sanctions would deny Iran the economic relief anticipated under the original Agreement. It would not be surprising, therefore, if Iran considers these sanctions part of US compliance.

Iran’s violations of the Agreement have been mounting over the last year, to the point that (along with violations relating to several nuclear facilities) enrichment has now reached 20% (the cap being 3.753%, which is the level used for a nuclear power plant) and the amount of material stockpiled exceeds the 300 kg limit. Some parties construe these steps as evidence of intent to produce nuclear weapons. Iran has insisted that they are for peaceful purposes only, that it has no nuclear ambitions, and that at any rate these actions are reversible. The ambiguity is to Iran’s advantage at present: The possibility of moving toward nuclear weapons has advantages in bargaining and is a warning to potential aggressors.

If, in 2015, Iran’s compelling interest in the Nuclear Agreement was relief from economic sanctions, that interest is all the more acute today. The fact that Iran’s leaders are open to returning to compliance with the JCPOA if the US also agrees to comply might be surprising considering the bad faith previously shown by the US. Asking Iran to forgo weapons development is a big ask, given that the US has worked to align Arab states with Israel in opposition to Iran and is fortifying this alliance via arms deals. The new administration needs to demonstrate that the US will take a different direction. Biden’s promise to immediately rescind the Muslim travel ban is one of many near-term steps that convey good will. Steps like this can build trust. Our advocacy should not only support reentering the JCPOA but ask that the Administration reframe Middle East policy, giving clear priority to diplomacy and humanitarian programs.

Route to Rejoining JCPOA

Laura Rozen: [Europe, Biden aligning on saving Iran deal before expanding on it](#), 2020/12/21

Robin Wright: [Nuclear Diplomacy with Iran: What’s Ahead for the Biden Administration?](#) 2020/1/6

USIP: [The Future of the Iran Nuclear Deal Under the Biden Administration](#),
Summary of the report of the panel on 17 December 2020

Seyed Hossein Mousavian and Mohsen Haghirian: [How Can the United Nations Facilitate Dialogue in the Persian Gulf after Biden's Inauguration?](#) 2021/1/17

Ryan Costello: [Gaslighting Can't Obscure Trump's Iran Failures](#), 2021/1/15

150 MOCs to Biden: [Letter of Support for returning to JCPOA without conditions](#),
2020/12/23

Tehran Times: [EU, Germany and Biden administration agree that JCPOA is a win-win: Kimball](#), 2020/12/30

Wilson Center Panel: [Joe Biden's Tough Challenges on Iran](#), 2021/1/14

Holly Daggess: [The Qasem Soleimani assassination feels like ages ago—but Iran hasn't forgotten](#), 2021/1/1

Nancy Gallagher: An attack on an Iranian nuclear facility would also spur intense public support for expanding Iran's nuclear program. We asked about this in 2019 and will be getting fresh data on the question soon:

Q28. If the United States were to attack Iran's nuclear facilities, do you think Iran should:

	Aug. 2019
Expand its nuclear activities	61.8
Rebuild its nuclear program to the current level	16.0
Reduce its nuclear activities	9.5
Completely stop its nuclear activities	7.8
DK/NA [vol.]	4.9

Research Professor
International Security and Economic Policy Specialization Head
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Barbara Slavin: [Advice to Iran as a new administration takes over the White House](#), 2021/1/14

The Atlantic Council: [The complexities of unraveling US sanctions and returning to the JCPOA](#), 2021/1/28

James Acton: [With Iran, Biden Can't Let Perfect Be the Enemy of Good](#), 2021/1/13

ICG: [The Iran Nuclear Deal at Five: A Revival?](#) 2021/1/15

Robin Wright, [James Jeffrey, Jarrett Blanc: Biden & Iran: The Policy Debate](#),
2021/1/13

Regional Complications

Webinar: [The Iran Nuclear Deal in a Rapidly-Changing Middle East](#), 2021/1/21
January 21 @ 7:30pm EST. It is put on J Street, NIAC, FCNL and the University of Denver's Center for Middle East Studies. Zoom registration [here](#).

Juan Cole: [Already a New Boss in Town: Saudis, afraid of Biden, Hurry to End their Blockade on Qatar](#), 2020/1/5

Dave DeCamp: [Israel Plotting to Sabotage Biden's Return to Iran Deal](#), 2021/1/12

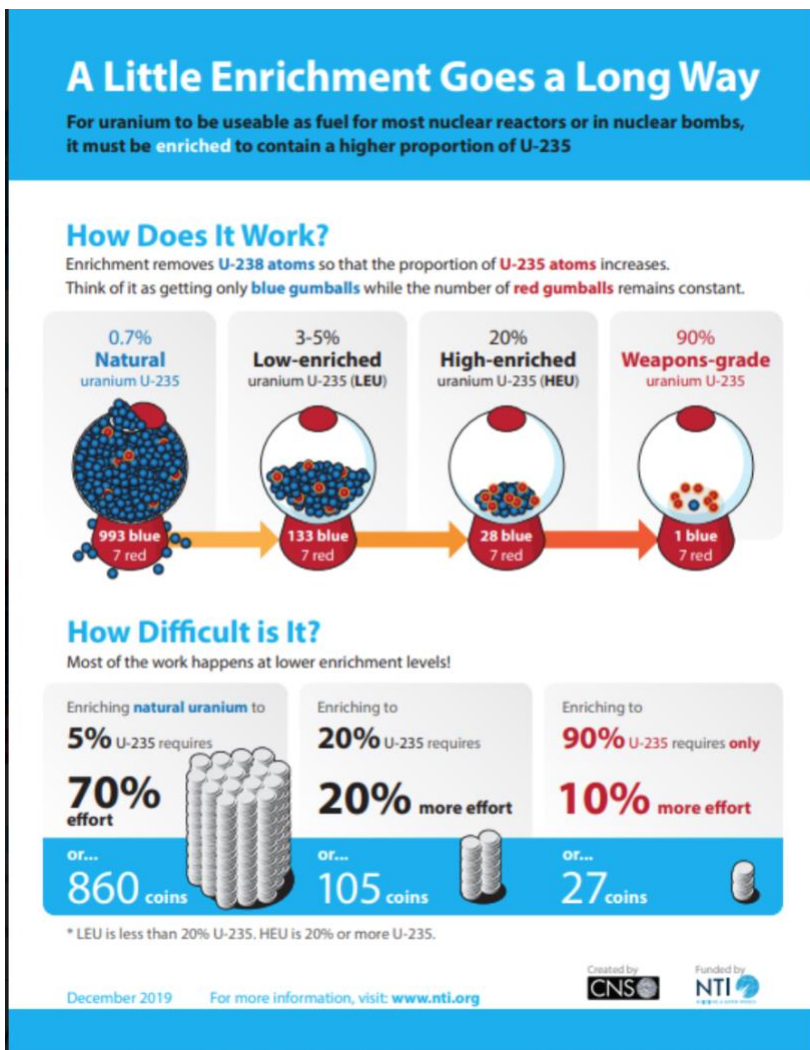
Shira Rubin: [Israel deploys submarine to Persian Gulf in message of deterrence to Iran](#), 2020/12/23

Mitchell Plitneck: [How will Joe Biden deal with an emboldened Israel?](#) 2020/12/17

John Davidson: [Iran expands shrines and influence](#), 2020/12/2

Sabina Siddiqui: [New Iran-Pakistan border crossing has implications beyond trade](#), 2021/1/3 The opening could indicate a tilt toward China by Iran and comes at a time when there have been small tensions in Islamabad's relations with Riyadh.

ICG: [The U.S. Should Reverse Its Huthi Terror Designation](#). 2021/1/13



IAEA and Nuclear Proliferation

[NIAC Statement on Iran Resuming 20% Enrichment](#), 2021/1/4

Robert Kelley comment: You cannot make a nuclear bomb from 20% enriched uranium. 20% enriched is an accounting value. The lower end of HEU which was chosen by lawyers not physicists!

Iranian Military

Reuters: [Iran tests drones in military exercise](#), 2021/1/5

David Hambling: [Why Iran Is Arming Its Drones With Air-To-Air Missiles](#), 2021/1/11

Sahil Shah and Fabian Hinz: A nuisance to the West, a life insurance to the Islamic Republic: [Can Biden do anything about Iran's missiles?](#) 2021/1/18

Legislation, Advocacy

CODE Pink: [Join 50+ Foreign Policy Experts Calling for Biden to Make Peace with Iran](#)

Rep. Barbara Lee has introduced her bills to repeal the 2001 and 2002 Authorizations for Use of Military Force.

- H.R. 255 -- 2001 AUMF Repeal ([35 cosponsors](#))
- H.R. 256 -- 2002 AUMF Repeal ([39 cosponsors](#))

Two reports on AUMF repeal that should speak to conservative members of Congress are:

- [Heritage Foundation Report](#) that supports the repeal of the 2002 Iraq AUMF on page 5.
- [Concerned Veterans for America's report](#) on repeal of the 2002 Iraq AUMF.

Iranian Economy

By Aresu Egbali and Sune Engel Rasmussen: [Battered by U.S. Sanctions, Iran Finds a Lifeline in Domestic Economy](#), 2020/12/26

Iran's diversified economy is producing goods the country had long imported,

Human Rights

Arash Azizi: [Why Is Iran Kidnapping and Executing Dissidents?](#) 2021/1/12

Abductions and executions of Iranian journalists and activists seem to be aimed at complicating the resumption of talks under the Biden administration.

Joe Snell: [Iran's Christians face renewed fears ahead of Christmas](#), 2020/12/18

The case of Dabrina Bet Tamraz and her parents highlights a string of crackdowns against Evangelical and Protestant Christians have forced many to flee.

Anoosheh Ashoori: [Message on COVID crisis in Evin Prison](#),

COVID in Iran

Sina Toossi: [Iran's Bewildering Own Goal on Vaccine Procurement](#), 2020/1/13

Juan Cole: [The Arrogance of Superpower: Trump will "Let" Iranians import Coronavirus Vaccine](#), 2020/12/30

Nasser Karimi: [Iran: Pfizer Vaccine Expected from US Benefactors](#), 2020/12/28

Sarah Marsh: [Cuba to Collaborate with Iran on Coronavirus Vaccine](#), 2021/1/9

Media

Brook Singman: [Twitter removes Iran supreme leader's 'misleading' tweet on US COVID-19 vaccines, in line with new policy](#), 2021/1/9

Holly Dargès: [How an anti-elite TV drama became Iran's lockdown hit](#), 2021/1/1

History

Philip Gordon: Losing the Long Game: The False Promise of Regime Change in the Middle East, St. Mathews Press, 2020.

Philip Gordon's latest book destroys the promises and claims of regime change proponents in his analysis of seven decades of regime change failure in the Middle East. The study starts with the 1953 coup in Iran and includes an analysis of what went wrong in the two Afghanistan interventions, Iraq, Egypt, Libya, and Syria. The book's conclusion clearly summarizes the lessons that should by now be learned:

1. Removing a regime is the "easy part"
2. Security vacuums can be even worse than repressive regimes
3. Locals don't always welcome "Liberators"
4. "Clients" have their own agendas
5. Regional spoilers thwart success
6. Unintended consequences are inevitable
7. Regime change creates moral hazard
8. Americans don't know enough about the Middle East
9. U.S. staying power is limited.
10. Democracy is elusive, especially in the Middle East
11. Even lots of money and troops are not enough

He concludes that there are alternatives to regime change that do less damage, cost less and enhance rather than diminish America's reputation and influence. The alternatives fall in the category of "containment". We can move in the direction we want to go without blowing everything up.

Rob Grace: [Abandoning Sabotage in Iran](#)

U.S. covert action in Iran has played a historically destructive role in U.S.-Iranian relations. In 1953, when the United States was planning to overthrow Iran's Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh, CIA agent Roger Goiran warned that the endeavor would harm long-term U.S. interests and lead Iran to view the United States as a supporter of "Anglo-French colonialism." The CIA fired Goiran for his opposition and went forward with its plan, but his prediction came true.

Afshon Ostovar: [After Soleimani: Iran's elite commander has been dead for a year. The machinery he built lives on](#), 2020/1/3

Interesting summary of the rise and precarious status of Iran's regional influence.

ADVOCACY MISSION STATEMENT

Peace Corps Iran Association advances peace and understanding between Americans and Iranians through education, outreach and advocacy, and upholds the legacy of the Peace Corps in Iran.

ADVOCACY COMMITTEE PURPOSE STATEMENT

Peace Corps Iran Association advocates for peace and understanding through education, outreach, and cultural diplomacy.

PRINCIPLES: The Board of Peace Corps Iran Association has adopted the following Guiding Principles for our advocacy efforts toward improving relationships between Iran and the United States, and their peoples.

1. Understanding and acceptance of other people and cultures are the building blocks of friendship, inclusiveness and world peace. As citizens of a world power, Americans bear a special responsibility.
2. Tolerance and mutual respect form the foundation for peaceful interactions between countries and their citizens.
3. Bringing countries and their citizens into the global community through cultural and economic ties reinforces international cooperation and reduces the likelihood of armed conflict.

4. Negotiation and diplomacy are essential to resolving international issues.
5. Force is rarely justified in dealing with conflicts. Peace is built and sustained through voluntary agreement and consent.

GROUND RULES:

1. The Advocacy Bulletin is an opt-out email publication for PCIA members interested in this subject. It is a way to share ideas, information, and opportunities for action. The Bulletin is archived on the website.
2. PCIA members are invited to share articles for publication. The editor decides which articles are selected for publication. Some pieces, particularly when not aligned with PCIA's Mission, Values, and Guiding Principles, or which do not relate to the current state of Iran advocacy issues, may be posted in PCIA's Facebook group.
3. Articles should be addressed to AdvocacyBulletin@peacecorpsiran.org and the release question answered, "I consent/do not consent to the release of my writing beyond the Advocacy Bulletin distribution and PCIA archives." If consent is given, statements issued to the public will be identified as coming from the author, and not PCIA, the Advocacy Committee, or Board.
4. Writers are encouraged to include action recommendations and reference information to help readers understand issues.
5. The Advocacy Bulletin is not an academic journal, but it does aspire to be fact-based. Whenever possible citations and links to web-based articles should be included in the articles.
6. Opinions and ideas from members expressed in the Bulletin do not represent Board positions. However, members of the Advocacy Committee may present a position to the Board and request endorsement. Positions adopted by the Board to be posted in the Advocacy Bulletin will be identified as such.

The opinions of the in this issue are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the board of PCIA. Contributions to the Advocacy Bulletin are most welcome and may be submitted to the editor at AdvocacyBulletin@peacecorpsiran.org

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