



The Cyrus Cylinder 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.

Contents of July 2023 Advocacy Bulletin

- **Looking for Kernels of Hope, by Paul Barker**
- **Iranian Politics**
- **Diplomacy**
- **Protests**
- **Economy**
- **Sanctions**
- **Region**
- **Environment, Science**
- **Human Rights**
- **Nuclear News**
- **Legislation**
- **History**
- **Media**

Note from the Editor

Looking for Kernels of Hope

By Paul Barker

If there has been progress over the past month in moving forward in implementation of an unwritten understanding to decrease tensions between Iran and the US, it is being done without any fanfare – which is probably the only way that it could be done. Political realities in Tehran and Washington make it impossible for officials of either country to be seen as possibly making any concessions to the other. At the same time, it is difficult to see an advantage for either side in allowing tensions to be fanned and enflamed. Rumors of an impending prisoner swap are encouraging but can only be fully believed when such a swap happens. On the other hand, [Iranian provocations of shipping near the Strait of Hormoz and US military](#) responses serve to stoke tensions and fears or worse to come.

Rob Malley, the US Special Envoy for Iran, is still on leave pending the conclusions of a security clearance review. Meanwhile Abram Paley, who was recently as Senior Advisor for the Middle East and North Africa to VP Harris, has taken over the lead role on US policy towards Iran.

In the broader diplomatic context, it is useful to realize [how US influence in the Middle East is decreasing, and why this may be a good thing.](#)

While few large demonstrations now take place in Iran, personal acts of anti-hijab behavior continue to proliferate, predictably infuriating reactionaries in the government. After being sidelined since the early days of the Women, Life, Freedom movement, Iran's notorious morality police have resumed their forced-veiling patrols. Their return is being criticized by activists and opposition politicians, including former President Khatemi. The embers of protest are very much alive and can easily be fanned and enflamed.

If you are looking for some positive news, some secrets for sustainable living enshrined in ancient technologies of the Iranian deserts, you may enjoy articles on how [the wind was harvested for air conditioning](#), [the winter's cold was stored for ice in the summers](#), and [wind power was captured to mill flour](#).

Provocative Iranian investments to become a nuclear weapons threshold state and the international community's investments to contain and limit that ambition are in the best possible scenarios a tremendous waste of time, energy, talent, and money because the weapons would never be used. The same can be said of all other nuclear weapons programs in the world. In the negative scenarios, nuclear weapons would be used with devastating consequences for the victims and perpetrators of the attacks. All of that time, talent, energy, and money would be better spent developing and promoting technologies that are needed if we and future generations are to have any hope for a sustainable future.

Iranian Politics

[Iran's pro-reform camp warns against end to 'republicanism', low-turnout polls](#), AMWAJ, 2023/6/21

[Could the IRGC pull a Wagner Group move in Iran? That's what some Iranians are hoping for.](#) Holly Dagues, Atlantic Council, 2023/6/29

[Khamenei faces multiple crises as anniversary of Iran protests nears](#), Anonymous, The Stimson Center, 2023/7/11

Despite intense repression, civil society entities in Iran have proven that they cannot be uprooted or destroyed

Diplomacy

[Why is the US Losing the Middle East?](#) MAPA, 2023/7/17

Trita Parsi and Joshua Landis - Why the US is losing the Middle East

[Track 1.5 Dialogue on Iran, the JCPOA and Future Scenarios](#), Roxane Farmanfarmanian, 2023/6/28

[Blinken: 'We'll see by their actions' if Iran willing to deescalate tensions, 'no agreement in the offing'](#), Laura Rozen, Diplomatic, 2023/6/29

"There is no agreement in the offing, even as we continue to be willing to explore diplomatic paths," Secretary of State Antony Blinken said at the Council on Foreign Relations on June 28.

[**An Unwritten Deal Is Exactly What Iran and America Need**](#), Trita Parsi, Foreign Policy, 2023/6/20

An informal agreement is a poor substitute for an official one—but exactly what the circumstances call for.

[**Can an Unwritten U.S.-Iran Agreement Break the Nuclear Deadlock?**](#) Quincey Institute, 2023/6/23

[**Interim Iran nuclear talks set back by disagreements over US prisoners**](#), Middle East Eye, 2023/6/28

[**Biden's Iran Envoy Is Placed on Leave Amid Security Clearance Review**](#), Michael Crowley, NYT, 2023/6/29

Even before the news about his leave, Robert Malley seemed to be playing a less prominent role in U.S. policy toward Iran in recent months.

[**Is the EU condemning itself to irrelevance on the Iran nuclear file?**](#) Marc Martorell Junyent, The Stimson Center, 2023/7/17

[**Netanyahu Takes Aim At U.S. Diplomacy Again**](#), Melvin Goodman, Counterpunch, 2023/6/23

[**The US military's most advanced fighter jets and a warship are going to work in the Middle East to stop Iran from seizing commercial ships**](#), Joel Epstein, Business Insider, 2023/7/18

Protests

[**Inside the Iranian Uprising**](#), PBS Frontline, 2023/6/29

[**'Not Our Enemies': Iran's Crackdown On Protest By Disabled War Veterans Triggers Outrage**](#), Golnaz Esfandiari, Mohammad Zarghami, 2023/7/13

[**Iranian Women Face Increased Violence as State Resumes Forced-Veiling Patrols**](#), Center for Human Rights in Iran, 2023/7/18

[**Return Of 'Morality Police' To Iranian Streets Leaves Women Fearful But Defiant**](#), Mehdi Tahbaz, Radio Free Europe, 2023/7/20

Economy

[**Economic incompatibility limits Russia-Iran ties**](#), Arman Mahmoudian, Stimson Center, 2023/7/13

Despite rising arms trade due to the Ukraine war, Iran and Russia remain natural economic competitors and their partnership is likely to remain limited.

[**Will Iran vs. Kuwait-Saudi Arabia gas clash turn into trilateral deal?**](#) Amwaj, 2023/7/11

Sanctions

[**Sanctions on Iran also limit its access to international dispute resolution mechanisms**](#), Ameneh Dehshiri, Stimson Center, 2023/7/19

U.S. withdrawal from the nuclear deal not only caused foreign companies to break contracts but made it more difficult for Iran to seek redress

[Biden has maintained Trump's failed sanctions policies](#), Adam Dubard, The Hill, 2023/06/22

[Iran accuses U.S. Navy of defending fuel smuggling in Gulf incident](#), Reuters, 2023/5/10

[How well-connected Iranians import their goodies](#), The Economist, 2023/7/20

[US bans 14 Iraqi banks in crackdown on Iran dollar trade](#), Wall Street Journal reports, Reuters, 2023/7/19

Region

[US mulls air defenses for Iraqi Kurdistan as Iran warns of renewed strikes](#), Amwaj, 2023/7/16

[Iran backs Putin as conservatives blame Wagner revolt on west](#), Amwaj, 2023/6/25

Environment, Science

[Climate Crisis: Iranian City, hottest in World on Thursday, hits Record for late Spring Heat at 50.8 °C \[123.44 °F\]](#), Juan Cole, Informed Comment, 2023/6/25

[Firouz Naderi, NASA Scientist Who Led Mars Missions, Dies at 77](#), Farnaz Fassihi, NYT, 2023/6/22

In a career that was an inspiration to Iranians and Iranian Americans, he oversaw multiple missions to Mars, including two successful landings.

Upon his retirement in 2016, the International Astronomical Union named an asteroid after him at NASA's request. The asteroid, 5515 Naderi, is a rock about six miles in diameter orbiting the sun between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter, far from the borders separating people on Earth.

[Iran's ancient 'wind catchers' beat the heat naturally](#), AFP, 2023/7/21

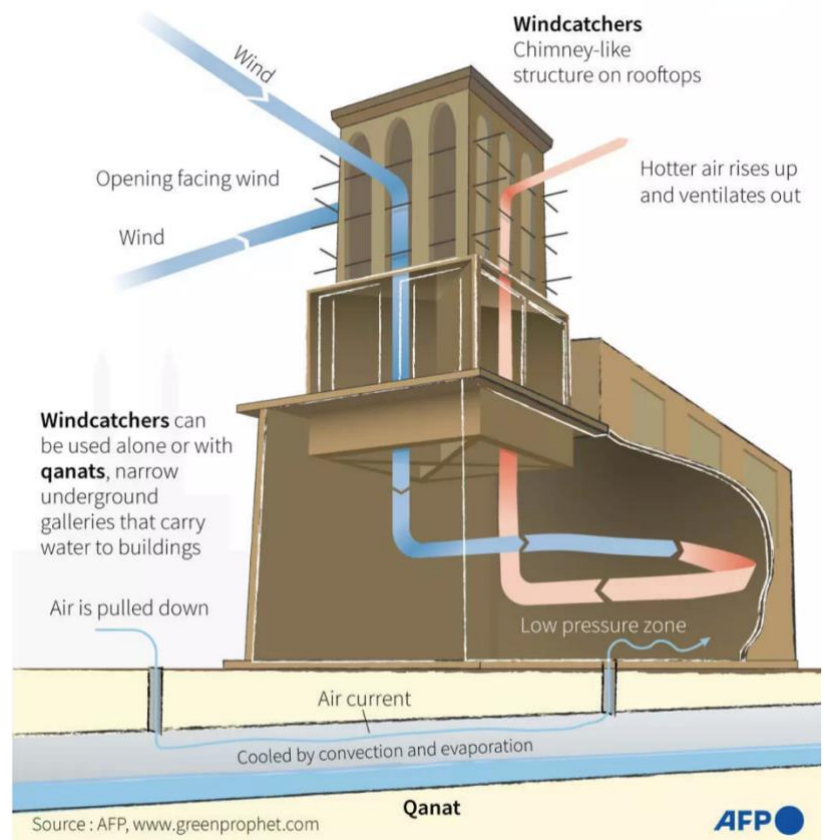
[Ancient windmills of Khorasan](#)

[Ancient Ice-Making Machines In Persian Desert, The Yakhchāl](#)

[For the Planet](#), Newsletter of RPCVs for Environmental Action, July 2023

Iran's ancient windcatchers

Yazd in Iran, one of the hottest cities in the world, is known for windcatchers, traditional structures on rooftops to cool buildings



Iran's ancient windcatchers © Anibal MAIZ CACERES, Julia Han JANICKI / AFP

Human Rights

[A Case of Enforced Disappearance: Saeed Zinali](#), NIAC, 2023/7/18

Nuclear News

[Iran is not Developing Nuclear Weapons, According to a U.S. Intelligence Assessment](#), NIAC, 2023/7/13

[A Plan to Reduce Nuclear Dangers in a Time of Peril, Daryl G. Kimball](#), Arms Control Association, 2023/7/1

[Iran's nuclear program has a long history of advances, setbacks and diplomatic pauses](#), Sina Azodi, Stimson Institute, 2023.6.28

Iran's nuclear program and hedging strategy have a long history, going back to the days when Iran and the U.S. were friends.

[Western Powers Confront Iran's Missile Program and Russian Relations: An Examination of JCPOA Compliance and Resolution 2231's Future](#), NIAC, 2023/7/13

Legislation

[Twenty years after the invasion of Iraq, Congress still has unfinished business](#), Barbara Lee and Bridget Moix, CNN, 2023/3/18

[Majority of House members call for increased measures to stop Iranian nuclear weapons](#), Mark Rod, Jewish Insider, 2023/6/26

History

[From Esther to Persepolis: Harbingers of Woman, Life, Freedom](#), A discussion with Ms. Mahnaz Afkhami, Ms. Homa Sarshar, and Ms. Marjane Satrapi, moderated by Dr. Mandana Zandian as a part of the conference "Dialogues on Iran's Transition to Secular Democracy" co-hosted by Stanford Iranian Studies, Gozar.org, and KAI on March 25-26, 2023.

[Fellow Aryans and Muslim brothers Iranian narratives on the Kurds](#), Walter Posch

Media

Be Like Others, Iranian series on trans issues in Iran [مثل دیگران باش](#)
Being trans is not illegal in Iran, but why would anyone want to be female given a choice? Because they feel that's who they truly are.

Video of Peace Corps experience in Iran: [داوطلبان سپاه صلح youtube](#)

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.

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