



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.

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### Note from the Editor

## Unintended Consequences. New Strategy Needed.

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

For decades Israel's stated fear of Iran was based on the latter's hostile rhetoric, its nuclear program and its advanced missiles. Its hostility towards Iran has been a central part of its ever-expanding military response against Hamas 2023-10-7 attack. The obliteration of Gaza has expanded to attack on targets in the West Bank, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Iran and now Qatar. This latest expansion of its target list was reckless not only in blowing up the latest effort to find a negotiated way to end the devastation and starvation in Gaza and secure the release of its remaining hostages there. It also showed that US security guarantees to Qatar are worthless. The attack has forced countries near and far to reassess their security alliances.

Egypt and Gulf Arab states are calling for the creation of an Arab version of NATO for protection against Israeli aggression. Saudi Arabia and Pakistan have concluded a [mutual defense agreement](#) with language mirroring NATO's Article 5. Pakistan's nuclear arsenal (probably larger than Israel's) and its Shaheen-III ballistic missiles put Israel within range of a Pakistani military response. Rather than protecting itself from a potential Iranian nuclear threat, Israel now finds itself within range of a well established Islamic nuclear power.

Prior to Israel's June 12-day war against Iran (belatedly joined by the USA), Iran and the US had been engaged in promising negotiations to constrain Iran's nuclear program. That short war blew up those negotiations, leaving Iran's nuclear program out of compliance with JCPOA limits. This led to the E3 calling for the snapback reimposition of UN sanctions on Iran. Iran has tried, so far without success, to forestall this step with the [offer of significant concessions](#). Unless that de-escalatory formula is found, UN sanctions on Iran will snap back on 28 September.

Isn't there a better way forward? Couldn't Iran's offer be welcomed, tweaked and turned into a time-extending formula for securing and diluting Iran's stockpile of highly enriched uranium; relieving some sanctions on Iran; and creating enough time and space to reach an interim then a lasting deal? Can't we find creative ways to address [Iran's legitimate interest in a secure energy future](#) that is not dependent on fossil fuel and nuclear technology?

In this latter regard it is noteworthy that [Iraq](#), [Türkiye](#), the UAE and Saudi Arabia are making substantial investments in clean, sustainable energy. With dramatic drops in the price of wind and solar energy and advances in battery technology, the economic arguments for an Iranian nuclear energy program have shriveled. [China](#) could be encouraged to expand its wind and solar energy investments in Iran as part of its belt and road foreign aid program. A more inspired US foreign aid program could also be framed to support sustainable solutions instead of unending threats.

PCIA's upcoming, and final, reunion and conference in Washington DC will feature a panel on [Iran Today and the Way Forward for Diplomatic Openings](#). It should be timely.

If you are participating in the conference and are interested in staying an extra day in Washington to lobby your state's congressional delegation on two issues, a) securing funding and support for an independent Peace Corps program, and b) preventing a costly and unnecessary war between the USA and Iran, let me know at [paul@peacecorpsiran.org](mailto:paul@peacecorpsiran.org).

To quote an Iranian-American Uber driver's wisdom, shared with Bill Spurlock, "The job of our leaders is to make peace. Not to make war."

## **Diplomacy isn't naïve – It's what the majority of Iranian Americans believe in**

By John Limbert, Sanandaj 1964-66

**My name is John Limbert. I served for thirty-four years as a U.S. diplomat, including as Ambassador and as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Iran. As an American, my connections to Iran reach back over sixty years and I have deep family and other roots there. I was also one of the Americans taken hostage in Tehran in 1979. I've written books about diplomacy with Iran and spent my life, often in the most difficult circumstances, seeking a better path - one that serves the interests of both Americans and Iranians - through mutual understanding and dialogue.**

I joined NIAC's Community Council because I believe our country is always better served by peace than by war, and that the voices of my Iranian-American friends and relatives should play a central role in shaping how we get there.

NIAC's new poll with YouGov confirms that belief. **A large majority of Iranian Americans support a new nuclear agreement with Iran - [62% in favor vs. 22% opposed](#).**

Not because they are naïve about the appalling reality of the Islamic Republic or unaware of past failures, but because they understand that diplomacy offers the best chance to prevent war, protect human rights, and improve life for ordinary Iranians.

Their support is not only for a new nuclear deal. When asked what would be the most successful way to address [regional security](#), the [nuclear issue](#), and even [human rights](#) in Iran, Iranian Americans overwhelmingly say diplomacy, not war or sanctions, is the most effective approach.

There are dissenting views reflected in the poll, and that's as it should be. Some of my own Iranian family members disagree with me. But what stands out is that, for those who support diplomacy, the reason is clear: a large majority say an agreement will [improve the lives of ordinary Iranians](#). This community cares deeply about the long-suffering people of Iran, not just the politics.

**NIAC continues to be one of the most consistent voices in Washington pushing for a return to the negotiating table, even as others beat the drums of war.** If you haven't done so already, I encourage you to read [Iran Unfiltered](#), NIAC's weekly newsletter on developments in Tehran and Washington - an essential tool for staying informed in an era of spin and disinformation.

**The data tells us what we already know: diplomacy isn't just possible; it's essential.** And it's what the large majority of Iranian Americans support.

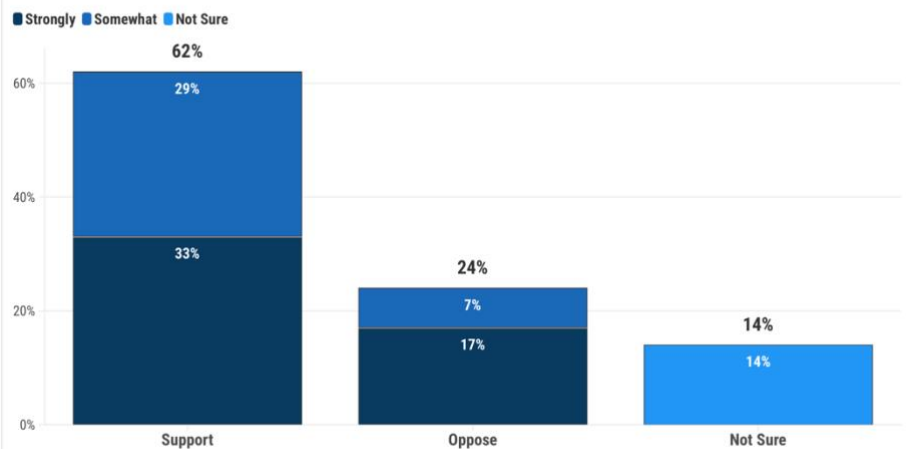
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With respect,  
Ambassador John Limbert (ret.)  
*NIAC Community Council Member*

FIGURE 4: Views of Iranian Americans

#### A New Nuclear Agreement

Some have suggested that the U.S. and Iran could negotiate a new agreement that guards against Iran securing nuclear weapons. What best describes your views toward a new nuclear agreement between the U.S. and Iran?



Source: The National Iranian American Council (NIAC) and YouGov national poll of Iranian American voters and the US general population conducted between May 10, 2025, through June 2, 2025.

## US Policy

[Four scenarios for war — and peace — with Iran.](#) June's 12-day conflict exposed the limits of US pressure, forcing Washington to decide what it really wants. Sina Toossi, Responsible Statecraft, 2025/8/21

[Trump's Iran War Mulligan.](#) The president soon will have another shot to avoid the sand trap of a Mideast war. Andrew Day, The American Conservative, 2025/8/27

[E3, US Needs a More Effective Diplomatic Strategy for Iran Post-Snapback,](#) Kelsey Davenport, ACA, 2025/8/28

[The Path to a Good-Enough Iran Deal.](#) How Washington and Tehran Can Bridge the Gap on Enrichment, Robert Einhorn, Foreign Affairs, 2025/8/29

[Hegseth fires head of Defense Intelligence Agency, Lt. Gen. Jeffrey Kruse.](#) The firing follows a June preliminary assessment from the DIA — the Pentagon's main intelligence wing — of the Iran military strikes, which prompted vicious backlash from the Trump administration. Warren Strobel, Noah Robertson and Dan Lamothe, WAPO, 2025/8/22

[Why does peace cost a trillion dollars?](#) As Congress returns to a Pentagon budget fight, we must ask ourselves: why is military spending skyrocketing even without a war? Stephen Miles, Responsible Statecraft, 2025/9/3

[The U.S. Should Be Skeptical about 'Iran-Backed' Militants.](#) Misleading Israeli narratives could push Washington toward war. Harrison Berger, The American Conservative, 2025/9/3

[Stories of Shock and Horror: Iranian Americans Oppose War with Iran,](#) Myriam Sabbaghi, FCNL, 2025/7/8

## Iranian Policy

[Iran submits nuclear roadmap to Trump as E3 snub concessions,](#) Amwaj, 2025/9/19

[Iran's Foreign Policy Is Changing in Real Time.](#) The debate in Tehran is heating up—and moving in unexpected directions. Sina Toossi, Foreign Policy, 2025/9/11. . . . the Reform Front's postwar "National Reconciliation" [statement](#) landed with unusual force: It called for releasing political prisoners, reforming state media, restoring public trust, and—most provocatively—voluntarily suspending uranium enrichment in exchange for the complete lifting of sanctions. The backlash was immediate. Hard-line outlets branded the statement naive, a "surrender," even treasonous.

[In U-turn, Iran signals readiness to share fate of 'bombed' enriched uranium,](#) Amwaj, 2025/9/8. There are now signs that progress on all three European preconditions may buy time for diplomacy—and possibly forestall a second wave of Israeli attacks on Iran.

["Snapback" Compounds the Multidimensional Crisis Facing Iran.](#) A convergence of pressures has left the Iranian regime scrambling to maintain control while projecting strength externally, Anonymous, Stimson Institute, 2025/9/5

[Iran weighs NPT exit as E3 trigger 'snapback' mechanism](#), Amwaj, 2025/9/1

[Former Iranian FM to Trump: 'Stop Listening to Bibi'](#), Foreign Policy Live, 2025/8/28

[Reformists attempt comeback through statement](#). “Reformists” or “Moderates” describe themselves as individuals who believe in the status quo and reforming the Islamic Republic, while “Principlists” or “Fundamentalists” are what Western media call “hardliners.” Holly Daggess, *The Iranist*, 2025/8/22. An umbrella of twenty-seven reformist factions—issued a statement outlining an eleven-point roadmap for domestic and foreign policy reforms, arguing it was the only way for “choosing a courageous path of national reconciliation.”

[Fifty blasts, fires tracked across Iran since ceasefire with Israel](#). Amirhadi Anvari, *Iran International*, 2025/8/17

[Analytical Report on “Iranians’ Political Preferences in 2024”](#), Gamaan.org, 2025/8/20

- A significant majority of Iranians (around 70%) oppose the continuation of the Islamic Republic. The highest level of opposition (81%) occurred during the “Woman, Life, Freedom” uprising.
- The dominant political orientation in society is “regime change as a precondition for change” (approximately 40%), followed by “structural transformation and transition from the Islamic Republic.” Support for regime change is more prevalent among the youth and the educated population.
- Support for “the principles of the Islamic revolution and the Supreme Leader” has decreased (from 18% in 2022 to 11% in 2024).
- Opposition to the Islamic Republic is higher among the youth, urban residents, and the highly educated.

[Beyond the shadows: The first Iran-Israel war and the test of endurance](#), Amwaj, 2025/8/27

## European Policy

[Escalating Risks After the UN Security Council Decision on Iran](#), Iran Unfiltered, 2025/5/19

[Why Europe’s ‘snapback’ miscalculation risks war, not diplomacy](#), Trita Parsi, Amwaj, 2025/8/29

[Europe's snapback gamble risks killing diplomacy with Iran](#), Sina Toosi, Responsible Statecraft, 2025/8/28

[A narrow path forward: Iran and the snapback deadline](#), Oliver Meier, European Leadership Network, 2025/8/28

[The Colossal 'Snapback' Error](#). The three European governments risk driving Iran to withdraw from the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Daniel Larison, *Eunomia*, 2025/8/28

[Russia maneuvers to avert Iran nuclear showdown with 'snapback' extension](#), Amwaj, 2025/8/25

[Despite move to avert nuclear crisis, Russia faces explosive allegations in Iran, Amwaj, 2025/8/27](#)

[Joint statement of FMs of Russia, China and Iran re E3 Snapback, 2025/9/1](#)

[How to Make Snapback a Success, Ellie Geranmayeh, Foreign Policy, 2025/9/3](#)

[More people charged since Palestine Action ban than during entire 'war on terror'. Four times as many people charged under \[UK\] Section 13 terror powers since July than between 2001 and June 2025. Daniel Tester and Simon Hooper, Middle East Eye, 2025/9/11](#)

[Global Peace Index 2025, Institute for Economics & Peace,](#)

### **Israel-Iran-USA**

[Amb. John Limbert to Newsmax: Priority for Hostages Is Survival, Newsmax, 2025/8/16.](#) Additional comment from John: For me the point about diplomacy is that you may fail, but you never give up. I am hearing voices within Iran that say, "Whatever bad things the Americans may have done, we need to be able to talk to them. Our survival depends on that."

[Israel Had 3 Goals: Drag The US Into War With Iran, Collapse The Regime, And Degrade Iran Into Another Syria Or Lebanon. They Failed. Now They're Desperate To Strike Again Before Iran Rebuilds. Trita Parsi on Steve Bannon's War Room, 2025/8/26](#)

[Targeting Iran's Leaders, Israel Found a Weak Link: Their Bodyguards.](#) Israel was able to track the movements of key Iranian figures and assassinate them during the 12-day war this spring by following the cellphones carried by members of their security forces. Farnaz Fassihi, Ronen Bergman and Mark Mazzetti, NYT, 2025/8/30

[12-day war: videos reveal Iranian missile strikes censored by Israel, The Observers, FRANCE 24](#)

[Israel is modernizing its nuclear arsenal, Daryl Kimball, X, 2025/9/3](#)

[Israel Is Considered a "Genocidal, Apartheid Country" Abroad, According to Israel's Own Research.](#) Mark Penn's Stagwell was commissioned by the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs to chart a path out of global isolation. Ryan Grim, Drop Site News, 2025/9/5

[Iran reveals new war footage as concern over renewed clash with Israel grows,](#) Amwaj, 2025/9/8

[These Peace Negotiators Say It's Time to Give Up on the Two-State Solution,](#) Michelle Goldberg, NYT, 2-25/9/8. Rob Malley and Hussein Agha's struggles to find a path to peace.

[Top 4 Reasons Netanyahu Bombed Negotiators' Offices in Qatar,](#) Juan Cole, Informed Comment, 2025/9/10

[By bombing Doha, Israel once again undermined America's credibility and standing.](#) Perhaps this episode will force Trump to recognize the folly of outsourcing American policy in the Middle East to Israel. Trita Parsi, Substack, 2025/9/9

[Execution of Babak Shahbazi: Allegations of Espionage, Torture, and Political Repression,](#) Iran Unfiltered, 2025/9/19

[Israel's Strike on Qatar and the Shifting Regional Narrative: From Anti-Iran to Anti-Israel,](#) Iran Unfiltered, 2025/9/19

## Media

[A Dangerous Profession, from Palestine to Iran: When Journalists are the Target,](#) Fariba Amini, Informed Comment, 2025/9/3

[In sign of changing times, parody of national icon lands Iranian comedian in legal trouble,](#) Amwaj, 2025/9/2

[Washington Post Editorial Board Gives Blessing to Endless War on Iran,](#) Ryan Costello, NIAC, 2025/9/3

[New Podcast Announcement: SoftPower/FulStories,](#) by Christopher Wurst. A new podcast featuring Peace Corps voices launches September 5th.

## Economy

[Will return of UN sanctions sever Iran's economic lifelines?](#) Esfandyar Batmanghelidj, Amwaj, 2025/9/1

## Region

[Riyadh-Islamabad "Islamic NATO" to Check Israel in Shadow of US Decline,](#) Juan Cole, 2025/9/19. In a dramatic signal that the Arab Gulf nations have completely lost faith in the American security umbrella, on Wednesday September 17, Saudi Arabia signed a mutual defense pact with Pakistan. Mirroring the language of Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization charter, they announced that an attack on one is an attack on both. . .

If Israel were to strike at Riyadh now the way it bombed Doha, it would be a declaration of war on Pakistan, a nuclear state with Shaheen-III ballistic missiles that can reach 1,710 miles — i.e. they can reach Israel. That means that Pakistani nukes can reach Israel. . . .

This development demonstrates how crazy Israel's strike on Qatar was, and how badly it has backfired, not only on Israeli security but also on the standing of the United States in the Middle East, which is now viewed as fickle and undependable and not a power it is worth bandwagoning with.

[How Israeli strikes are compelling shift in Gulf security thinking](#), Amwaj, **2025/9/11**. The Doha strike reveals the limitations of this [Abraham Accords] logic—entanglement has not guaranteed security, nor has it ensured American restraint of Israel.

[America may have invaded Iraq for its Oil, but Solar Power is what Iraqis now Want](#), Juan Cole, Informed Comment, **2025/8/21**

[The Plight of Afghans in Iran: The Complex Gendered, Socio-political and Cultural Dimensions of a Fraught and Critical Relationship](#). October 23, 2025; 2:00 - 3:30pm;

[Iran link to Australian synagogue attack uncovered via funding trail, spy agency says](#), Kristy Needham, Reuters, **2025/8/27**

[Australia Breaks With Iran - Sign Of A New War Coming?](#) Moon of Alabama, **2025/8/26**. No evidence of Iranian responsibility. Suspicious timing.

[Staggering Death Toll Rises to 32 in Single-Deadliest Israeli Strike on Journalists](#). Unable to strike Ansarallah's military capabilities in Yemen, Israel has attacked its civilian cabinet members and a major press building in recent weeks. Shuaib Almosawa and Murtaza Hussain, Drop Site, **2025/9/18**

## **Nuclear, Missiles**

[What You Need to Know About Iran Sanctions Snap Back at the UN: A Q&A with Kelsey Davenport, Tess Bridgeman and Clara Apt](#), Just Security, **2025/8/29**

[Cairo Nuclear Understanding Offers Iran a Fragile Opening Amid Snapback Countdown](#), NIAC Insights, **2025/9/12**

[IAEA inspectors return to Iran as top security council weighs green light for inspections](#), Amwaj, **2025/8/26**

[Iran can still build nuclear weapons without further enrichment. Only diplomacy will stop it](#), Edwin Lyman, Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, **2025/7/2**

**History of Iran's nuclear program, 1957-2025**  
Overview of key events

 <p><b>Beginnings under the Shah</b> 1957-79</p> <p>Iran starts its nuclear program with French and US support, aiming to build reactors to generate energy under the Shah's modernization plans.</p>	 <p><b>Revolution and war halt progress</b> 1979-89</p> <p>The Islamic Revolution and the subsequent Iran-Iraq War disrupt the nuclear program, halting construction and damaging facilities like in Bushehr.</p>	 <p><b>Revival with Russian support</b> 1990s</p> <p>Iran resumes its nuclear program in the 1990s, partnering with Russia to complete the Bushehr power reactor—despite western opposition.</p>	 <p><b>Nuclear crisis and diplomacy</b> 2002-15</p> <p>Undeclared facilities are exposed in 2002, raising concerns about Iran's intentions and triggering closer inspections, west sanctions and diplomat efforts.</p>
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[Nuclear terrorists wear suits: How Iran could build a nuclear weapon without state approval](#), Matt Caplan, Vesal Razavimaleki, Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, 2025/7/31

[Pakistan nuclear weapons, 2025](#), Hans M. Kristensen, Matt Korda, Eliana Johns, Mackenzie Knight-Boyle, Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, 2025/9/4

[Why Are Democrats Pushing for More Nuclear Weapons?](#) Former Biden defense officials start a new center at MIT to push an arms race. Joe Cirincione, 2025/9/10

## Environment

[Battling Power Outages and Heat Wave, Iran Orders More Shutdowns](#), Amid suffocating temperatures, the Iranian authorities are closing public offices and cutting water and electricity as the country struggles with an energy crisis. Sanam Mahoozi and Erika Solomon, NYR, 2025/8/22

[Iran's Water Crisis Opens A New Front With Israel](#). Radio Free Europe, 2025/8/26

[Overview of energy policy in Iran: the proper path to clean energy](#), Maryam Hasheminejad, Hasan Raei, Abbas Maleki, Academia Green Energy, 2024/8/26

[Three Dams in Iran Dried Up, Eight More Near Collapse](#), Sia Rajabi, Iran Focus, 2025/9/4

[Iran Seeks China's help to Install 7 gigs of new Solar Capacity in "4th Industrial Revolution"](#), Juan Cole, Informed Comment, 2025/9/13

## Human Rights

[Still in Shambles, a Notorious Iranian Prison Is Holding Dissidents Again](#). Israel largely destroyed Evin prison, one of Iran's most infamous symbols of oppression, in June. Less than two months later, Iran began returning male prisoners. Farnaz Fassihi and Leily Nikounazar, NYT, 2025/8/23

[Large rise in number of people executed in Iran, says UN](#), Olivia Le Poidevin, Reuters, 2025/8/29

[Women in Iran May Soon Gain the Right to Obtain Motorcycle Licenses](#), NIAC, 2025/8/29

[After crafting quiet Florida life, Shah of Iran's alleged 'chief torturer' must now face trial](#). Parviz Sabeti crafted an anonymous new life for his family – but now he faces a \$225m lawsuit for atrocities committed in prisons in Tehran and elsewhere. Richard Luscombe, The Guardian, 2025/9/11

[Cafés in Iran Face Fresh Seals as Hijab Enforcement Escalates](#), NIAC, 2025/9/12

[Iran executes a man accused of killing a security guard in 2022 Mahsa Amini protests](#), AP, 2025/9/5

## Peace Corps Advocacy

[New Peace Corps Related Legislation](#), NPCA, 2025/9/18

[Setting the Record Straight: What the Rescissions Mean for Peace Corps. What the rescission actually targets.](#) Glen Blumhorst, Peace Corps Worldwide, 2025/9/7

## History

[Ancient Nomadic Scythians Found to be Ethnically Diverse,](#) Juan Cole, Informed Comment, 2025/8/24

[Ancient Iran's Paradise Pleasure Gardens: Unimaginable Beauty and Opulence,](#) Peter Edwell, Informed Comment, 2025/8/24

[Scientists Prove Justinian's Plague, which Continued through the Rise of Islam, was Caused by Y. Pestis,](#) Juan Cole 2025/9/14. After Heraklios defeated the Sasanians in 628, the Iranian empire appears to have fallen into political instability, with a series of short-lived rulers. We know that at least one died of plague. Did a major plague outbreak help the rising Muslim empire conquer Iran? Did early Arab Muslims establish garrisons outside conquered cities in part to avoid teeming imperial cities rife with the plague bacterium?

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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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