



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 November 2025 Advocacy Bulletin

- What to Do When the Taps Run Dry? By Paul Barker
- Environment
- US Policy
- Iran Policy
- European Policy
- Regional News
- Nuclear and Missile Issues
- Media
- Polls
- Israel, Iran, US Complications
- Human Rights
- Media
- Human Rights
- Economy
- Planning Ahead for PCIA

What to Do When the Taps Run Dry?

Note from the Editor by Paul Barker

If you forgot to celebrate the Persian harvest festival, [Jashn-e Mehregan](#), this year perhaps you can add a pomegranate and apple salad to your American Thanksgiving celebration. That being said, [climate change is making it harder](#) to celebrate harvests – and get water out of urban taps in Iran.

For thousands of years the people inhabiting Iranian plateau have evolved ingenious water management systems to support dynamic civilizations around the mountain ranges that define their geography, leaving sparsely populated the desert plains in the center. As long as the mountains catch and retain sufficient snow in the winters, life is sustainable. Climate change is driven by the laws of physics and chemistry, paying no heed to whatever human suffering may inevitably follow. It is now inflicting harsh new realities on the farmers, nomads and city dwellers of Iran. Drought is now in its fifth and most severe year. Current [snow levels in Iran are 98.6% lower](#) than last year. The reservoir behind the Karaj dam has drained down to the Dead Zone where it cannot provide water downstream and the four other reservoirs serving Tehran are not far behind. Groundwater has been so over-pumped for decades that buildings and infrastructure are subsiding. There is no near-term viable option for relocating Tehran's 14 million people. Measures to conserve and reuse water supplies should have been

implemented decades ago. Iran's water shortage is an unavoidable crisis for the government.

Nonetheless other crises facing Iran remain unresolved and threatening. Israel continues to pose an existential threat to the Iranian regime. Diplomacy between the US and Iran is stuck with deep Iranian mistrust of US reliability and Iran's unhelpful insistence on only indirect negotiations. For its part the US is insisting on diplomatic concessions as unacceptable to Iran today as were Pompeo's 12 demands from Trump's first term. Both sides seem to feel that the best that they can do is endure an era of [strategic patience](#) until such time as new leadership emerges.

Coincidentally speculation is mounting that we may be about to witness a [change in Ayatollah leadership](#), and perhaps an even more dramatic change in the governing structure of Iran. Simultaneously President Trump's grip on the Republican Party and US government seems significantly weaker than it was only weeks ago. Will this lead to efforts to consolidate support through popular domestic agenda items, or to adventurous international actions, like regime change in Venezuela or Iran, to divert media and public attention?

Environment

[Iran's snow cover plummets 98.6% as water crisis deepens.](#) Intellinews, 2025/11/17

[Iranian dam effectively shut down due to ongoing drought,](#) Intellinews, 2025/11/19

[Tehran's Residents Are Panicking as Taps Run Dry.](#) Years of drought and neglect have left the city nearly unsustainable. Nik Kowsar and Alireza Nader, Foreign Policy, 2025/11/11

[Precipitation Welcomed in Iran Amid Historic Drought, Deepening Water and Subsidence Crisis.](#) Iran is experiencing one of the most severe drought cycles in decades, as record-low rainfall, shrinking reservoirs, and accelerating land subsidence converge into a nationwide environmental emergency. Iran Unfiltered, 2025/11/18

[Massive Fire Reignites in Iran's Ancient Hyrcanian Woodlands.](#) A renewed wildfire in the Hyrcanian forests of Elit in Chalous County has entered its sixth consecutive day. NIAC Insights, 2025/11/21

[What Policies Can Help Solve Iran's Climate-Driven Water Shortage?](#) Sanam Mahoozi, and Nima Shokri, Informed Comment 2025/11/18

[Will Climate Change force Tehran to Evacuate?](#) Juan Cole, Informed Comment, 2025/11/9

[Iran Faces the Driest Autumn in 57 Years Amid Escalating Water Crisis,](#) Officials warn that this year's autumn will bring historic low rainfall, shrinking reservoirs, and a worsening threat to drinking water in major cities such as Tehran, Tabriz, and Mashhad. NIAC Insights, 2025/11/6

[Drinking water in Tehran could run dry in two weeks, Iranian official says.](#) A historic drought in the country has culminated in a '100 percent drop in precipitation' in the Tehran region. Mariamne Everett, Al-Jazira, 2025/11/2

[The importance of renewable energy expansion in power generation sector in Iran: a computable general equilibrium approach,](#) Fatemeh Chatri, Adademia.edu, 2025

[Energy transition in Iran: advancing climate resilience and energy security through renewable energy,](#) Dorsa Razeghi-Jahromi, Abbas Maleki, Academia Green Energy, 2025/10/31

[With China's Help, Saudi Arabia is Deploying Solar Power Faster than any Country in History,](#) Juan Cole, Informed Comment, 2025/11/1

[Politicians hail Iraq-Turkey 'oil-for-water' accord as critics cry foul,](#) Amwaj, 2025/11/20

[Policy Framework of Non-Fossil Power Plants in Iran's Electricity.](#) Sector by 2030, Ali Abbasi Godarzi, Abbas Maleli, Institute for Sustainable Energy Planning and Management, 2020

US Policy

[Iran and Trump Posture on Potential Negotiations.](#) Contradictory signals about the possibility of renewed talks between Iran and the United States continue to surface. NIAC Insights, 2025/11/21

[Iran Policy Memo: What Comes Next? J Street,](#) 2025/11/3

Policy Recommendations:

1. [Avoid getting dragged back into war.](#)
2. [Continue seeking short-term measures to re-establish full IAEA presence in Iran.](#)
3. [Warn Iran against continued nuclear escalation.](#)
4. [Support a new deal with Iran, but acknowledge that it will have to be different from the JCPOA.](#)
5. [Take advantage of the Gulf States' desire to normalize relations and de-escalate tensions with both Israel and Iran.](#)
6. [Define the endgame.](#)

[The Regime Changers Work for the President,](#) Yes, blame Rubio for his part in this unfolding disaster, but it is Trump's policy and he deserves most of the blame for it. Daniel Larison, Eunomia, 2025/10/29

[Trump says he was 'very much in charge' of Israel's June 13 attack on Iran.](#) US president says the surprise Israeli assault that killed Iranian generals and scientists was a 'great day for Israel'. Ali Harb, Al-Jazira, 2025/11/6

[Tomorrow is Yesterday: Rob Malley on Israel-Palestine and US-Iran,](#) Negar Mortazavis speaks to Robert Malley about his new book, with Hussein Agha, "Tomorrow Is Yesterday: Life, Death, and the Pursuit of Peace in Israel/Palestine". They

also discuss US-Iran tensions and negotiate under Presidents Obama, Biden and Trump. The Iran Podcast, 2025/11/9

['It Feels Like I'm in a Nightmare': Inside the First Deportation Flight to Iran.](#) For decades, Iranians fleeing persecution have found protection in the United States. But this fall, the Trump administration deported a planeload of people to Iran after making a deal with Tehran. Farnaz Fassihi and Hamed Aleaziz, NYT, 2025/11/11

[The Perils of an 'Iran-Centric' Policy in Lebanon.](#) There is much to lose in treating Lebanon as a clone of Syria. Ali Rizk, 2025/11/18

[Trump-MbS meeting sparks talk in Iran of Saudi mediation,](#) AMWAJ, 2025/11/19

[NIAC Sues ICE for Documents on Detentions of Iranians and Deportations to Iran,](#) NIAC, 2025/11/20

Iran Policy

[Khamenei's Eclipse: Absolute Rule Crumbles into Paralysis and Infighting in Iran.](#) The leader's eclipse has left Iran without a functioning helm and caused stasis across all sectors even as the country faces unprecedented domestic and foreign challenges. Anonymous, Stimson Center, 2025/11/12

[The Autumn of the Ayatollahs, What Kind of Change Is Coming to Iran?](#) Karim Sadjadpour, Foreign Affairs, 2025/10/14

[New statue of ancient Shah highlights Iran's turn to pre-Islamic past,](#) Amwaj, 2025/11/11

[Mohammad Khatami's Political Warning: A Critique of Government and Media After the War.](#) Former Iranian president Mohammad Khatami has once again drawn national attention with his sharp political remarks regarding Iran in the aftermath of the 12 Day War. NIAC Insights, 2025/10/29

[Iran joins UN anti-terrorism treaty in hope of easing economic sanctions.](#) Islamic Republic seeking removal from Financial Action Task Force blacklist, which has greatly hampered its financial sector. Times of Israel, AFP, 2025/10/22

[Nationalism Rising in Iran After the 12-Day War.](#) The Iranian government has embarked on an ambitious campaign to restore confidence and project unity through revived nationalism and the glorification of ancient Persian symbols. NIAC Insights, 2025/11/12

[Iran Lodges Complaint After Trump Claims He Was in Full Control of June War](#) Iranian officials reacted sharply after the U.S. President Donald Trump claimed that he was "very much in charge" of Israel's June 13 attack on Iran. Iran Unfiltered, 2025/11/10



A crowd gathers to witness the unveiling of a statue depicting defeated Roman emperor Valerian kneeling before Iranian king Shapur I, Tehran, Nov. 7, 2005. (Photo via Quora Online)

[**IRGC Seizes Marshall Islands–Flagged Tanker Near UAE**](#) . Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) has seized a fuel-carrying commercial vessel near the coast of the United Arab Emirates and redirected it toward Iranian waters, according to maritime monitoring sources cited by Reuters. 2025/11/14

[**Iranians Being Themselves Underscores Relaxed Social Norms**](#). Ryan Costello, NIAC Insights, 2025/10/28

[**Green Movement leader snipes at Khamenei amid crackdown on Iranian leftist scholars**](#), AMWAJ, 2025/11/3

[**Iranian ex-spy chief resurfaces, challenging claims of deep Israeli infiltration**](#), AMWAJ, 2025/11/4

[**New York mayoral race becomes mirror for Iran's political divides**](#), AMWAJ, 2025/11/6

European Policy

[**‘Annulled’! Russia won’t abide snapback sanctions on Iran**](#). The US-led move to reimpose UN sanctions on Tehran has drawn Moscow’s ire, and with it a bifurcation of international law. Eldar Mamedov, Responsible Statecraft, 2025/10/24

[**Iran and France Conduct Prisoner Exchange Amid Diplomatic Overtures**](#), Iran and France have carried out a reciprocal release of prisoners, marking the latest episode of politically sensitive diplomacy between the two countries. NIAC Insights, 2025/11/6

Regional News

[**Iran’s Release of the Seized Oil Tanker and Its Geopolitical Significance**](#). Iran has released the Marshall Islands–flagged tanker Talara after five days of detention in the Persian Gulf. NIAC Insights 2025/11/20

[**As Iraqi Vote for a Parliament, U.S. Presses to Rid Country of Iran’s Influence**](#). **After a U.S. occupation, years of sectarian violence and a jihadist insurgency, Iraq has become an improbable haven of calm in the Middle East.** Erika Solomon, NYT, 2025/11/11

[**The Plight of Afghans in Iran**](#). Nilofar Pourzand, Center for Refugee Studies, 2025/10/28. Over 2 million Afghans expelled from Iran after June Israel-US war on Iran. They forfeit their savings in Iranian banks and the children born in Iran go to Afghanistan as stateless persons. They face no educational opportunities. Before the 12 day war, there were more Afghan students in Iranian universities than in Kabul.

[**Cautious Diplomatic Maneuvers Amid Broader Stalemate**](#), NIAC, 2025/10/31

[**The Arab World’s Last Militant Leader Is Elusive and Defiant**](#). **Israel has battered its enemy commanders into submission except one: Abdulmalik Al-Houthi, a secrecy-obsessed fighter whose followers believe he is anointed by God.** Saleh al-Batati, Rory Jones and Summer Said, WSJ, 2025/11/2

[**Iran floats ‘dual-track approach’ as Baghdad playbook gets reconsidered**](#), AMWAJ, 2025/11/3

[Is Iran turning to China amid a post-war defence reset](#), AMWAJ, 2025/11/12

[Saudi Nuclear Posture After the 12-Day War](#), Ellie Geranmayeh, Cinzia Bianco, and Camille Lons, War on the Rocks, 2025/11/14

Nuclear and Missile Issues

[Iran Formally Ends Cairo Agreement After IAEA Resolution Presses Iran for Transparency](#). The International Atomic Energy Agency's Board of Governors has adopted a new resolution pressing Iran to provide immediate clarity on the status of its enriched uranium stockpile. NIAC Insights, 2025/11/21

[What we should be talking about after watching Bigelow's 'A House of Dynamite' nuclear thriller](#). Mark Goodman, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, 2025/10/25

[The U.S. Shouldn't Resume Nuclear Testing](#). Hawks have been banging the drum in favor of new nuclear weapons tests for a while, but it makes no sense. Daniel Larison, Eunomia, 2025/10/30.

[Donald Trump's Deep Nuclear Confusion](#). Hardly anything he said yesterday was true. But it could still trigger a dangerous new phase of the nuclear arms race. Joe Cirincione, Strategy & History, 2025/10/31

[IAEA unable to verify status of near weapons-grade uranium](#), The Iranist 2025/11/14

[Leaked clips of fortifications at underground military site ignite outcry in Iran](#), Amwaj, 2025/11/11

[Leaked clips of fortifications at underground military site ignite outcry in Iran](#), AMWAJ, 2025/11/11

Media

[Iran's new Hebrew-language media push: bold plan or symbolic gesture?](#) Amwaj, 2025/11/20

[From State TV to YouTube: The New Voice of Iranian Debate](#). A new generation of online talk shows, podcasts, and video debates is reshaping Iran's media culture, offering citizens, activists, and academics spaces to speak and listen. NIAC Insights, 2025/11/13

[How 'It Was Just an Accident' Editor Secretly Cut the Film in Iran Without Using the Internet](#), Variety, 2025/11/12

'Cutting Through Rocks' Review: The Only Way Out. A documentary about Sara Shahverdi, the first woman elected to the council of her village in Iran, is propelled by her no-nonsense resourcefulness. Sheri Linden, 2025/11/20

[How Women Journalists and Activists have been Changing the Middle East](#), Farinaz Basmehchi, Informed Comment, 2025/11/1

[Iran: Three Things The New York Times Gets Wrong](#), Ted Snider, Anti-War.com, 2025/11/17. Iran is not being isolated by the regional powers but integrated. Iran is not

seen by the countries of the region as the primary threat or source of instability. And Iran is not building a nuclear bomb.

Polls

[Domestic poll says 92 percent of Iranians dissatisfied](#), The Iranist, 2025/11/14

[Iranians' Attitudes Toward the 12-Day War](#). Psiphon VPN network, 2025/11/5

The survey “*Iranians' Attitudes Toward the 12-Day War*” was conducted across Iran from September 24 to 28, 2025, over a five-day period with the voluntary collaboration of the Psiphon VPN network. The results are based on a balanced statistical sample of 30,372 respondents from inside Iran. The findings reflect the opinions of literate Iranian residents aged 15 and older and are generalizable to this target population with a 95% credibility level and a 5% credibility interval.

About 44% of the population held the Islamic Republic of Iran responsible for starting the war, while 33% blamed Israel for initiating it, and 16% believed that both sides were equally at fault.

Regarding favorability of countries, asked in this survey, the United States received the most positive ratings (53%) and the least negative (37%) among Iranians. Israel ranked second with 39% positive and 48% negative views. Among the eight countries included in the survey, Russia (68% negative) and the United Kingdom (65% negative) received the highest negative ratings. Majorities also expressed negative views toward China (58%) and Turkey (53%). About half (49%) viewed Saudi Arabia negatively, while one-third (30%) viewed it positively. Regarding the European Union, 38% expressed a positive view and 46% a negative one.

Regarding the most effective way to bring about change in the country, about one-third (31%) considered civil protests the most effective method. Next, 18% favored “foreign pressure and intervention” as an effective strategy. Additionally, 14% considered “participation in elections” a viable method for change, while 6% chose “violent struggles”. About 13% said none of these methods were effective, and 17% expressed no opinion.

[National Public Opinion Survey 2025, PAAIA, 2025](#). The survey reveals several important trends that illustrate how Iranian Americans are navigating current challenges at home in the U.S. and abroad:

- ➔ Family ties remain strong, but communication barriers and U.S. visa challenges continue to strain relationships.
- ➔ More than half of Iranian Americans report experiencing discrimination in the U.S., especially younger individuals.
- ➔ Regime change (44%) and human rights and democracy (41%) are the community's top priorities in U.S.–Iran policy.
- ➔ Support for the Temporary Family Visitation Act (75%) remains overwhelmingly bipartisan.
- ➔ Iranian Americans express thoughtful, diverse views on U.S.–Iran negotiations and the June 2025 U.S. airstrikes.

[Study: Majority Instinct on Iran Is Restraint.](#) A review of existing polling finds Americans skeptical and confused over Iran strikes. Harrison Berger, The American Conservative, 2025/11/21

Israel, Iran, US Complications

[Israel Planned When and How to Strike Iranian Civilians, Leaked Transcripts Show.](#) Newly revealed deliberations expose how Israelis officials weighed strikes on civilian infrastructure and population centers, seeking to pull Washington into a longer war. Jamal Abdi, NIAC Insights, 2025/11/17

[Could Israel Pursue Regime Change in Iran?](#) Ryan Costello, NIAC Insights, 2025/11/13

[Iranian Missile Impacts in Israel Underscore Costs of War,](#) Ryan Costello, NIAC Insights, 2025/11/7

[Will the “12 Day War” Reignite?](#) Ryan Costello, NIAC Insights, 2025/10/23

[Prison Break: Israeli Disinfo Operations.](#) Negar Mortazavi interview with Alberto Fittarelli about Israel-linked influence operations that were pushing for regime-change during the 12-day war. Iran Podcast, 2025/10/27

[The Dawn that Never Broke: The Unresolved Israel-Iran War,](#) Kiavash Kalhor, Informed Comment, 2025/11/18

[Israel backs purported Iranian Army defections, but ‘deepfakes’ raise questions.](#) Amwaj, 2025/11/18

Human Rights

[Three Years After Mahsa Amini’s Death: Iran’s Unfinished Struggle Over Rights, Freedom, and Change,](#) Human Rights Tracker, NIAC, 2025/9/16

[Over 800 Iranian Artists and Writers Sign Statement Against Executions,](#) Iran Wire, 2025/10/21

[Ahvaz Tragedy: The Self-Immolation of Ahmad Baldi and Its Political Aftermath.](#) A wave of public grief and outrage has swept across Iran following the death of Ahmad Baldi, a 20-year-old student from Ahvaz, who self-immolated. NIAC Insights, 2025/11/12

[Iran to mobilize 80,000 volunteers for hijab campaign,](#) Iran International, 2025/10/17

[UN rapporteur on Iran rights raps Israeli attacks, post-war crackdown,](#) Iran International, 2025/10/30

[Thinking Is Not a Crime: The Arrest of Independent Scholars in Iran,](#) NIAC Human Rights Tracker, 2025/11/6

[UN: Iran’s Surge in Unlawful Executions May Amount to Crimes Against Humanity,](#) Center for Human Rights in Iran, 2025/11/3

[Two Men Arrested in Tehran Metro After Displaying Pre-1979 Flag,](#) Two men were detained in the Tehran Metro after a video circulated online showing them wearing

military-style uniforms and displaying a pre-1979 Iranian flag featuring the lion-and-sun emblem. NIAC Insights, 2025/11/14

[Slain Women Life Freedom protester's aunt receives flogging sentence](#), The Iranist, 2025/11/1

Doreh Book Club

On 14 January 2026, PCIA's online book club, Doreh, will discuss The Evin Prison Bakers Club. Here is a [review](#) of this remarkable club. If you would like to be included in the upcoming Doreh discussion, please contact dout@peacecorpsiran.org.

Economy

[Corruption, mismanagement in spotlight as Iran dissolves major private bank](#).

The bank built the largest mall in the world, but also racked up massive debt and gave loans to insiders. Maziar Motamedi, AlJazira, 2025/10/27

[Iran, Russia and the New Zealand insurer that kept their sanctioned oil flowing](#).

A dark fleet of tankers carried tens of billions of dollars of Iranian and Russian oil to Asia, evading Western sanctions. Reuters found the ships were connected by one thing: a small insurance company in New Zealand, run by a British family. Paul Carsten, Lucy Craymer, Gleb Stolyarov and Anna Hirtenstein, Reuters, 2025/10/27

Planning Ahead for PCIA

The Peace Corps program in Iran closed on 30 June 1976, which means that the members of the Peace Corps Iran Association are getting a bit on in years and slowly dwindling in numbers. The PCIA Board of Directors has decided to close our organization on 30 June 2026, exactly 50 years after the Peace Corps closed its doors in Tehran.

To make this happen, our various activities and newsletters will phase out over the coming six months. The PCIA Advocacy Bulletin will cease publication early in 2026. The monthly Iran discussion group which is supported by our advocacy committee will continue till the end, as it takes little support other than setting up a Zoom call. Once the PCIA Zoom account closes, we can continue to hold these monthly discussions on a private Zoom account. If you are interested to participate, let me know at Paul@PeaceCorpsIran.org.

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 in this issue are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the Board of PCIA. Letters and contributions to the Advocacy Bulletin are most welcome and may be submitted to the editor at Paul@peacecorpsiran.org.

Donations to PCIA Welcome: In order to support the advocacy and other work of the Peace Corps Iran Association, please consider [making a donation](#).