



**Statement of Subcommittee Chairman Peter King (R-NY)
Counterterrorism and Intelligence Subcommittee
House Homeland Security Committee**

The Future of Iranian Terror and Its Threat to the U.S. Homeland

Remarks as Prepared

At the outset, I want to express my strong opposition to the Iranian nuclear agreement. It is a false deal that gave Iran \$100 billion, access to global markets, and greater freedom of movement.

This morning, we have even more evidence of Iran's true nature as they released sensitive photographs of U.S. sailors during their illegal detention in Iran.

Since the "deal" was signed, the Administration has apologized to the regime and improperly altered U.S. law to allow certain travelers that have been to Iran and other terror hot spots to come to the United States without getting a visa.

While the White House and State Department have been moving forward with the nuclear deal, intelligence professionals in and out of government have been consistent that Iran and its proxies still pose a significant threat.

In his testimony before the Senate Intelligence Committee on Tuesday, Director of National Intelligence James Clapper acknowledged that Iran is "the foremost state sponsor of terrorism" and employs the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps—Qods Force (IRGC-QF), Hizballah, and other proxy groups. Director Clapper added that, "Iran and Hizballah remain a continuing terrorist threat to US interests and partners worldwide."

Similarly, the most recent State Department Country Report on Terrorism noted that, "Iran's state sponsorship of terrorism worldwide remained undiminished"

The NCTC's public website notes that Hezbollah "has established cells worldwide," and lists a number of plots across the globe linked to the group, including the 2008 plotting by a cell in Baku, Azerbaijan, the late-2008 disruption of a cell in Egypt, a disrupted operation in Turkey in 2009, and in early 2011 Israel warned its citizens of several Hizballah plots against Israeli interests in Turkey, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Cyprus. Also, in July 2012, Hizballah exploded a bomb on a bus in Burgas, Bulgaria. Not included in the list are the 1985 hijacking of TWA flight 847 and murder of American Robert Stethem, and the two bombings linked to Hezbollah in Argentina in 1992 and 1994.

Let us also remember that Iran has held a number of senior al Qaeda leaders since they fled Afghanistan after the September 11th attacks. Whenever it suites Iran they release some of these terrorists, including Muhsin al Fahdli, a senior leader of al Qaeda-linked Khorasan group who was killed

in a drone strike in Syria, and Sulaiman Abu Ghaith, Osama bin Laden's son-in-law who is now serving a life sentence in a U.S. prison.

Given these threats, it is imperative we examine how the Administration's Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) will influence Iran and its use of terrorist proxies. While the deal is intended to prevent Iran from developing a nuclear weapon, as DNI Clapper noted in his testimony, Iran's "military and security services are keen to demonstrate that their regional power ambitions have not been altered by the JCPOA deal." The deal is far more likely to reward Iranian bad behavior with billions of dollars, improved international standing.

While that the Administration is patting itself on the back for completing the JCPOA, Iran is likely to exploit every opportunity to either weaken the few restraints the deal places on them or using their newfound wealth to further destabilize the Middle East. We must analyze the effect this agreement has on Iran and how its proxies will change their behavior.

New income from renewed foreign investment and access to funds previously seized by the West will absolutely be used to support terrorist networks. How will these groups invest this money – and does the United States face an increased threat as a result?

Tehran will certainly provide additional resources to Shiite militias fighting on behalf of the Assad regime in Syria, and to the Assad government directly. Despite the President's insistence that he wishes to see Assad go, he has negotiated an agreement nearly guaranteed to comfort Assad by ensuring that his benefactors in Tehran have the resources they need to support his government. Does this deal reduce the likelihood that we will be able to end the Syrian civil war and destroy both the Assad regime and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria? And will the Shia militias again pose a threat to U.S. personnel in the region?

One of the most obvious concerns is the fact that our major regional partners, especially Saudi Arabia and Israel, are threatened by an Iran no longer burdened by sanctions. How will they respond to increased and better-funded Iranian aggression?

All of these questions are urgent. I have called this hearing today to begin to find reliable answers to inform Congress and the next Administration on how to best prevent Iran and its proxies from threatening U.S. interests and the Homeland.

Today, we have witnesses that will provide useful insight on what to expect in coming years from Tehran and their Allies. I look forward to hearing from them and thank them for their time.

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