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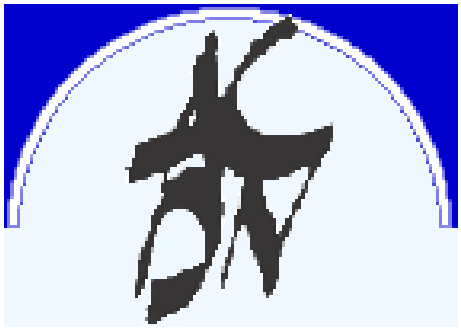

A PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THE IRAN CRISIS AND A NUCLEAR-FREE MIDDLE EAST

PARLIAMENTARIANS AND CIVIL SOCIETY APPEAL ON IRAN AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS

- Homepage - Petitions -

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Parliamentarians, civil society organisations, and prominent individuals are still invited to sign the following letter, which has been sent to its addressees 31 January 2006.

â€" - original letter follows here ---

To:

- President George Bush
- Secy of State Condoleeza Rice
- Secy of Defence Donald Rumsfeld
- UN Ambassador John Bolton

- President Ahmadinejad of Iran
- Foreign Minister of Iran, Kamal Jharze
- Iran UN Ambassador, H.E. Zarif-Khonsari

- Mr Ariel Sharon, Prime Minister of Israel
- Mr Ehud Olmert, exercising Prime Minister
- Mrs Tzipi Livni, Minister of Foreign Affairs
- H.E. Mr. Dan Gillerman, Israel UN Mission

cc

- Mr Kofi Annan, General Secretary of the United Nations
- Mr Mohamed ElBaradei, Director of the IAEA

- Mr Tony Blair, Prime Minister of UK
- Mr Jack Straw, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs

- M. Jacques Chirac, Président de la République Française
- M. Dominique de Villepin, Premier Ministre
- M. Philippe Douste-Blazy, Ministre des Affaires Etrangères

- Mr Jose Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission
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- Frau Angela Merkel, Bundeskanzlerin Deutschlands
- Dr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Deutsche Bundesaussenminister

- The Hon. John Howard, Prime Minister of Australia
-

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The Hon. Alexander Downer, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Australia

Dear Presidents Bush and Ahmadinejad, Presidents, Prime Ministers, Foreign Ministers, Secretaries of State and Defence and Ambassadors,

The proliferation of nuclear weapons is possibly the single greatest threat to civilisation. If a feared cascade of proliferation occurs, the probability that by malice, madness, miscalculation or malfunction, nuclear weapons will at some point be used will increase sharply. All nations have a responsibility to ensure that the number of nations with nuclear weapons does not grow, to prevent non-state actors from obtaining them, and for those who posses nuclear weapons
to eliminate and abolish them.

Threats and rumours of military action or even nuclear weapons use only worsen a growing crisis between Iran, the United States, and Israel.

Reports of preparations for and explorations of military options, no matter how speculative, are highly disturbing and are in themselves dangerous. Such explorations must cease. There must be no talk of war.

But there IS talk of war, both from the United States and from Israel. And, President Ahmadinejad, you have spoken of "wiping Israel from the map." In the US and Israel, 'hotheads' call openly for "swift military action", while 'responsible' leaders speak of "no option being ruled out." President Bush, we heard these same two formulations used just months before the invasion of Iraq. We urge that the
explorations of military or nuclear options cease immediately, and support IAEA General Director, Mohamed ElBaradei in calling for this belligerent talk from all parties to stop now.

The United States and other Nuclear Weapon States and de facto nuclear weapon states -nations that already possess nuclear weapons- have made little progress toward the internationally mandated goal of the total and unequivocal elimination of those weapons. Although there has been some limited progress in lowering total nuclear stockpiles, the established nuclear weapons possessors continue to rely on those weapons in their security doctrines, and do not envisage change in that posture 'for the foreseeable future'.

This continues in spite of a clear international consensus to the effect that nuclear weapons are a continuing threat to civilisation and life, in spite of repeated calls by the international community for progress toward their total and unequivocal elimination.

Nations that possess large nuclear arsenals cannot consistently or credibly call for others to eliminate or cease the pursuit of nuclear weapons arsenals of their own while not moving to eliminate their own nuclear weapons. A global commitment to the elimination of nuclear weapons is a global commitment to the elimination of nuclear weapons, and applies equally to all parties. There can be no exceptions. Those who now posses nuclear arsenals are obliged to eliminate those arsenals. Those who do not have them must not pursue them.

Similarly, the violation of the goal of a nuclear-free Middle East by one party does not in any way excuse its violation by another party. However, the renunciation of the nuclear option by one party will facilitate its renunciation by another party.

Israel's nuclear arsenal and the pursuit of nuclear weapons by Iran - if indeed that is taking place - are dangerous per se and open the gate for further proliferation by other Middle Eastern nations, and for a middle eastern arms race that

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would be dangerous in the extreme. This must not happen.

Serious concerns exist over the possibility that US nuclear doctrine may envisage strikes against other nations that involve a first use of nuclear weapons, or possibly the use of nuclear weapons against nations that are not themselves nuclear - armed. We note with approval the recent letter by US senators and others in this matter.

A third use of nuclear weapons must never take place. It would be a catastrophe not only for Iran or Israel but for the entire region and even for the entire world, because of its radioactive fallout, its chaotic effects, and because it would break the taboo against the use of these weapons that has so far held place for the last 60 years. Breaking this taboo could result in the further use of nuclear weapons, with a lower and lower bar for such use. The widespread use of nuclear weapons would be catastrophic for the world. We urge all parties to renounce the pursuit of nuclear weapons, and to adopt policies that rule out their use.

The Parliamentarians, civil society organisations, and prominent individuals signed below hereby urge a solution to the crisis in relations between the US and Iran, Israel and Iran, based on the following clearly defined principles:

1) No use of any military option whatsoever by any party for any reason.

2) A clear commitment by all nuclear-armed parties not to use nuclear weapons in this situation, and a broader commitment to the doctrine of no first use of nuclear weapons.

3) The implementation of the 1995 Non-Proliferation Treaty Resolution on a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in the Middle East, implementation of the annual consensus-adopted General Assembly resolutions on 'Establishment of a Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone in the region of the Middle East', and particularly the full implementation of this years resolution on nuclear proliferation in the middle -east.

4) A clear commitment by all parties to the global elimination of nuclear weapons, including through reaffirming the Final Declaration of the 2000 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, and relevant General Assembly resolutions.

5) A diplomatic path to the removal of tensions between the US, Israel, and Iran, involving compromise on both sides, recognition of the legitimate security concerns of all parties including both Israel and Iran, and refraining from inflammatory statements or the exploration of military options by any party.

Signed

- John Hallam, Friends of the Earth Australia Sydney Australia
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- Jean-Marie Matagne, Action des Citoyens pour le Désarmement Nucléaire (ACDN), France
- Peter Nicholls, Chair, Abolition 2000 UK
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*ECOLO & Groen! = Green Party
*PS = Social democrats
*sp.a = Social democrats
*NV-A & Spirit = Flemish regionalists
*VLD = Liberal party

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