

MEMO

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Indications of Troubling Concessions to Iran

Last week, the Obama administration indicated a willingness to consider dramatic immediate sanctions relief if Iran signs a final nuclear agreement. This marks another in a series of troubling concessions. The current administration positions will provide Iran with extensive and rapid sanctions relief, while enabling it to retain virtually its entire nuclear infrastructure. This departs significantly from previously outlined requirements for a good agreement. The administration apparently intends to rely on international monitoring and the willingness of future leaders to take rapid concerted action. In effect, this posture would grant Iran the status of a nuclear threshold state. Congress must scrutinize any final agreement to make sure that it will foreclose all paths to a nuclear weapon.



The announced framework reached between P5+1 and Iran provided numerous concessions to the Iranian regime.

No Nuclear Program:

Administration: “The deal we'll accept is they end their “nuclear program. It's very straightforward.”

- *President Barack Obama, Third Presidential Debate, Oct. 22, 2012*

Announced Framework: Iran will be allowed to continue its nuclear program, including uranium enrichment, research on advanced centrifuges and heavy water activity.

Dismantlement:

Administration: “Iran will be required to agree to strict limits and constraints on all aspects of its nuclear program, to include the dismantlement of significant portions of its nuclear infrastructure.”

- *White House Press Secretary Jay Carney, Press Briefing, Jan. 23, 2014*

Announced Framework: Apart from the core at Arak, Iran will not be required to dismantle any of its nuclear infrastructure, and will likely remain a nuclear threshold state for the duration of the agreement. Within 15 years, Iran will be able to operate as many centrifuges as it desires, reducing its breakout time to nearly zero.

Centrifuges:

Administration: “We are willing to consider a very limited, very intrusive, very heavily monitored, small limited enrichment program if it becomes a necessary.”

- *U.S. Negotiator Wendy Sherman, Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Feb. 4, 2014*

Announced Framework: Iran will be permitted to operate over 6,000 centrifuges for the first 10 years of the agreement and unlimited numbers thereafter.

Sanctions Relief

Administration: “It is the strong view of the administration that it would not be wise ... to simply take away sanctions on day one.”

- *Deputy National Security Advisor Ben Rhodes, Israeli television interview, April 6, 2015*

Announced Framework: The timing of sanctions relief was unclear in the framework. President Obama expressed flexibility on this question, and the Wall Street Journal reported on April 17 that Iran could receive between \$30 billion and \$50 billion upon signing the agreement.

Possible Military Dimensions:

Administration: “...we have required that Iran come clean on its past actions as part of any comprehensive agreement...”

- *U.S. Negotiator Wendy Sherman, Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Feb. 4, 2014*

Announced Framework: The framework is ambiguous on how and when Iran will address its past weaponization efforts.

Fordow:

Administration: “We see no reason for Fordow to remain an enrichment facility.”

- *U.S. Negotiator Wendy Sherman, Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Feb. 4, 2014*

Announced Framework: Iran will not close the Fordow facility and will be allowed to use the site to further develop enrichment technology.

Agreement Duration:

Administration: “Our goal is to reach a mutually-agreed long-term comprehensive solution that would ensure Iran's program will be exclusively peaceful.”

- *U.S. Negotiator Wendy Sherman, Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Feb. 4, 2014*

Announced Framework: Most nuclear restrictions will be lifted in 10-15 years. Iran could then possess the capacity to produce weapons-grade uranium for a bomb within days.

Inspections and Verification:

Administration: “We can envision a comprehensive agreement that involves extraordinary constraints and verification mechanisms and intrusive inspections, but that permits Iran to have a peaceful nuclear program.”

- *President Barack Obama, Saban Forum, Dec. 7, 2013*

Announced Framework: It is unclear whether inspections of suspect nuclear sites will be guaranteed. Iran has adamantly maintained it will not allow inspections of military sites. A yet-to-be established international mechanism may, or may not, allow for access. The timeframe for decisions of this mechanism remains to be established, but there clearly will not be “anywhere, anytime” inspections in Iran.