

The week ending December 12, 2014

## IRAN

### **U.S. Accuses Iran of Secretly Breaching U.N. Nuclear Sanctions**

The United States has privately accused Iran of going on an international shopping spree to acquire components for a heavy-water reactor that American officials have long feared could be used in the production of nuclear weapons-grade plutonium, reports [The Foreign Policy Group](#). A U.S. delegation informed a U.N. Security Council panel of experts monitoring Iranian sanctions in recent months that Iranian procurement agents have been increasing their efforts to illicitly obtain equipment for the IR-40 research reactor at the Arak nuclear complex. The U.S. allegations were detailed in a confidential Nov. 7 report by an eight-member panel of experts that advises a U.N. Security Council committee that oversees international compliance with U.N. sanctions on Iran. The United States indicated that foreign businesses and purchasing agents interested in doing business with Iran have been taking advantage of the improved diplomatic atmosphere to broker new deals with Iran. At the same time, they say there is overwhelming evidence that Tehran continues to transfer huge amounts of weapons to its proxies and allies, including Syria and Iraq.

## U.S. – ISRAEL RELATIONSHIP

### **Congress Unites to Condemn Hamas and Stands with Israel**

On Dec. 9, the U.S. Senate passed a concurrent resolution (H.Con.Res.107) that denounces the use of human shields by Hamas and other terrorist organizations. The following night, the House passed the Senate version by a voice vote. The legislation calls on the international community to acknowledge and condemn Hamas' flagrant violations of international law by sacrificing civilian lives. The bipartisan bill holds Hamas and other terrorist groups, such as Palestinian Islamic Jihad, accountable for the barrage of rocket attacks in Israel this summer. Reps. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL) and Ted Deutch (D-FL) – chairwoman and ranking member of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Middle East and North Africa – cosponsored the resolution, which originally passed the House last July. The bill also condemns the U.N. Human Rights Council's investigation into Israel's Gaza operations. It states, "...on July 23, 2014, the 46-member U.N. Human Rights Council passed a resolution to form a commission of inquiry over Israel's operations in Gaza that completely fails to condemn Hamas for its indiscriminate rocket attacks and its unconscionable use of human shields, with the United States being the lone dissenting vote." Sens. Ted Cruz (R-TX) and Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) introduced a Senate version of the resolution in July. They have both spoken out against the use of human shields by Hamas.

## **Members Urge Sanctions on Turkey and Qatar over Hamas Support**

Key members of Congress called on the Department of Treasury to sanction Turkey and Qatar if the two countries continue to support Hamas. Gathering 24 signatures, the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittees on Terrorism and the Middle East sent a bipartisan letter to Treasury's top sanctions official. The letter urged the undersecretary to take "all necessary measures to sanction individuals or entities that are directly or indirectly financing or materially supporting Hamas." Spearheaded by Reps. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), Ted Deutch (D-FL), Ted Poe (R-TX) and Brad Sherman (D-CA)—the chairs and ranking members of both committees—the letter both commended Treasury's efforts to sanction Hamas and expressed concerns regarding Qatar's and Turkey's relationship with the Palestinian terrorist group. The letter highlighted Qatar's \$400 million donation for Gaza reconstruction in 2012, and Turkey's close ties with Hamas, including hosting Hamas' terrorist operations headquarters, providing financial support and backing plots to replace the Palestinian Authority government in the West Bank. "Any entity or nation that continues to back this U.S. designated Foreign Terrorist Organization and provide it material and financial support should be sanctioned," stated the letter. "Therefore, as Members of the Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa and the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade, we are requesting that Treasury use every tool available to designate all individuals, institutions, entities, charities, front companies, banks, and government officials who clearly violate U.S. laws by assisting Hamas and its proxies."

## **ISRAEL IN THE NEWS**

### **'Tech for Good': Meet Israel's Hub for Social Startups**

There's high-tech—and then there's "Tech for Good," an Israeli organization that promotes technology development to solve social problems. To actualize its goals, the group last week inaugurated The Rally, Israel's first "social tech" accelerator that, said director Larry Akerman, aims to turn solving social issues like obesity, cyber-bullying, teen pregnancy, and much more from a niche effort by conscientious do-gooders to a mainstream business activity "that can have a widespread impact on society, while providing a good return on investment (ROI) for investors, just like a successful mobile app would." "We have a lot of great technology in Israel, but it has not really been applied specifically to addressing social issues," said Akerman, even if many of the technologies and products developed in Israel—like drip irrigation—have had a major social impact. Many of those technologies have indeed contributed to making life better for billions around the world, but The Rally has something else in mind. "Our accelerator program focuses specifically on technologies to solve social problems, the vast majority of which will probably not be addressed by developers working on their own." The Rally wants entrepreneurs to concentrate on solving problems—and the program will show them how to make it worth their while, said Akerman. According to [No Camels Israeli Innovation News](#), The Rally's social-tech approach is new in Israel, but similar accelerators have been around for several years in the U.S. and Britain. It's about time, said Akerman, that Israel had one too, considering the level of innovation here. There are a number of Israeli organizations that have sponsored hackathons or even more extended programs where participants have built apps and products to help those in need, but The Rally is the first social-tech entity to be integrated in the Israeli tech community.