

PREVENT THE NEXT WAR NOW:

Countering Common Myths on US-Iranian Relations



Five years after the start of the Iraq War, it is common knowledge that the Bush Administration brought the U.S. to war on the basis of miscommunications and lies.

Now, Iran is the target of the Administration's trumped up claims and overheated rhetoric. Based on unsubstantiated accusations, the Bush Administration's arguments blatantly ignore reports by the UN and U.S. intelligence agencies. Don't be misled into yet another disastrous war. If the media won't hold our government accountable, then we must!

Iran has a covert nuclear weapons program

In fact, neither the International Atomic Energy Agency nor the U.S.'s own 2007 National Intelligence Estimate have found evidence to suggest that Iran has had any sort of nuclear weapon's program since at least 2003.

Iran's nuclear enrichment program is a violation of international law

In fact, Iran's nuclear power program, including its uranium enrichment component, is entirely legal. As a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, Iran, like all "non-nuclear weapons states" that sign the treaty, has a guaranteed legal right to the production and use of nuclear power for peaceful purposes.

Iran's nuclear program poses an imminent threat

In fact, even assuming Iran does have a covert weapons program, the most pessimistic reports still put the country at years away technologically from achieving a viable nuclear weapon. The levels of purity required in enriching uranium for electricity generation are significantly lower than those required for weaponization, and there is strong evidence to suggest that Iran would face enormous resource obstacles in trying to achieve that higher enrichment level.

Iran has threatened the United States and U.S. allies in the Middle East

In fact, Iran has not directly threatened the U.S. or any other state. Iran has not invaded another country in over a century. Although Iran's president has made his dislike for Israel clear, he has never actually threatened Iranian involvement in harming the Israeli government or people. Furthermore, in practical terms, Iran is no match for the U.S. or Israel; the U.S. is by far the largest military power in the world, and Israel has by far the strongest military in the Middle East.

Iran is undermining security in Iraq

In fact, despite many U.S. allegations, no direct evidence has been found to support the claim that Iran is supplying weapons to Iraqi insurgents. Iran has historically supported many Shia groups in Iraq, and therefore maintains influence with both the Sadrist and powerful, U.S. backed parties in the Iraqi government. Furthermore, as Iraq's neighbor, Iran clearly has an interest in a stable Iraq, underscoring the Baker-Hamilton report's conclusion that any long term solution for Iraq must include Iran.

Iran supports terrorists throughout the Middle East

Although some of the elected Islamist parties in the Middle East receiving support from Iran do have military wings that engage in illegal activities aimed at civilians, the Iranian government has repeatedly offered to withdraw its support for such groups as Hamas and Hezbollah in exchange for normalized relations with the United States. Iran has further offered, as part of such an exchange, to use its considerable influence with Hamas in order to help mediate a lasting solution to the Palestinian/Israeli conflict.

There is no viable diplomatic solution to the U.S.-Iranian Conflict

In fact, many prominent U.S. and European politicians, diplomats and even military officers continue to call for diplomatic engagement with Iran and to speak out against the dangers of military confrontation. Over the past several years, Iran has presented the U.S. with several offers for direct negotiations, the last of which in 2003 offered to concede many of the U.S.'s stated points of interest in return for normalized relations and security guarantees. Despite the Iranian government's current conservative bent, many officials there still say they are open to talks with the U.S. The U.S. has recently been involved in fruitful negotiations with North Korea, even though that country has failed to provide information about its suspected enrichment program. And yet our government has simultaneously refused to pursue similar opportunities with Iran by making the one thing Iran refuses to do (suspend uranium enrichment) the one unconditional precondition to diplomatic engagement.

Prevent the Next War NOW! Express your opposition to a U.S. attack on Iran by holding your elected officials accountable. Educate your community, pass city peace resolutions, lobby local and congressional representatives.

The International Atomic Energy Agency, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (1968), the 2007 National Intelligence Estimate, Campaign Against Sanctions and Military Intervention in Iran (Twenty Reasons Against Sanctions and Military Intervention in Iran 2007), the Baker-Hamilton Report (2006), Institute for Policy Studies (Iran in the Crosshairs 2008)