

RELEASE IN PART B6

From: Sullivan, Jacob J <SullivanJJ@state.gov>
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To: H
Subject: Fw: Iran reaction to S Asia Society speech

Fyi

----- Original Message -----

From: Vali Nasr [redacted]
To: Sullivan, Jacob J; Ruggiero, Frank J
Cc: United Airlines [redacted]
Sent: Mon Feb 21 21:07:13 2011
Subject: Iran reaction to S Asia Society speech

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Frank Wisner, Rick Inderfurth, Joe Willimason and Suzanne DiMaggio (of Asia Society) participated in a Track II meeting with Iran on AfPak issues, sponsored by SIPRI in Stockholm. The meeting was over the weekend. The Iranian team was led by a senior member, Deputy Foreign Minister Dolatyar, who is Jalili's protoge and has affiliation with Iran's national security council.

Suzanne Di Maggio is preparing a report of the meeting, and will brief Bill Burns and Denis Ross (and I recommended Marc Grossman and Frank as well as Lute). I spoke with Frank, below are the highlights:

The meeting was business-like, and Iranians said nothing of recent US criticism of their clamp down on protesters. On the first day the US team walked Iranians through S's speech at Asia Society, and discussed references to Iran and the neighbors, and also discussed Reconciliation, Regional Engagement, and possible US-Iran cooperation. The Iranians listened but did not engage. On the second day, Dolatyar who had been silent on the first day, addressed the speech directly (Wisner thinks possibly after get direction Tehran), focusing on Reconciliation, US bases, Regional engagement and US-Iran cooperation. Dolatyar said:

1) Islamic Republic recognizes that the stand-off between US and Iran is dangerous and is not becoming of the two countries. US and Iran should cooperate where their interests are congruent, and Afghnaistan is one such area.

He made no promise that Iran will show up in Jeddah, but said that Iran was willing to cooperate on Bonn + 10. Dolatyar argued that Bonn + 10 should be about winning the peace and not winning the war. He said Iran is prepared to engage in a dialogue around how to achieve goals for Bonn + 10. He said the Secretary can communicate US intentions regarding regional engagement through the SwissEmbassy to the Iranian government. But Iran is willing to engage, and he said: "we are prepared to receive Grossman in Tehran" !!

2) There are no preconditions or linkages. There is no precondition involving sanctions before cooperation on Afghnaistan, and Iran sees AfPak as separate from the nuclear issue. Dolatyar said that there is paradox in US supporting sanctions against Iran, while the two cooperate on Afghnaistan. Iran understands the nature of that paradox, and can deal with it.

3) Dolatyar asked three times what kind of bases US intends to keep in Afghanistan and for what purpose. Wisner and company said that that could be a subject for discussion during the dialogue.

4) Iran understands the necessity of Reconciliation, but is weary of Pakistan-backed Taliban and a settlement that could empower the Taliban. Taliban shorn of AQ affiliation and subordinate to Afghan constitution is acceptable, but Iran does not see this as easily achieved and is suspicious of the process.

5) Iran would like to know what is the destination for Secretary's offer of regional engagement--what does US want to achieve with the engagement. Dolatyar also said that the core group for regional engagement ought to be Turkey-Iran-Pakistan, (the core of old Regional Cooperation and Development and now the regional forum ECO). He also said that Iran is comfortable with the UN umbrella.

Wisner thought that Iranians have a lot of questions but are clearly willing to engage (and was surprised by their tone), and were quite forthcoming in offering suggestions about ways to move forward (esp around Bonn + 10).

Jake: You may wish to talk to Frank directly to get more details. After Suzanne has debriefed USG on the meeting, a good next step could be that the same Track II team, in their own private capacity, answer some of the Iranian questions. The Asia Society speech has clearly provided a point of engagement around specific issues that it has raised and which Iran is interested in.

Best
Vali Nasr