

CAMPAIGN FOR A NEW AMERICAN POLICY ON IRAN

Wednesday, Januar 21, 2009, 12:30-2:00pm

Hosted by: American Conservative Defense Alliance

Meeting notes

[**Bold** is agenda items; *italics* means requests for action]

1. Welcome, Introductions, Announcements

- a. **AFSC** - Ed should be hosting a religious delegation from Iran today, but unfortunately the whole thing fell through due to visa issues. Our condolences.
- b. **OSPC** - 4 Doctors convicted in secret, Iranians are hesitant to get involved in exchange programs because the risk has escalated in recent weeks/months.
- c. **George Mitchell** - Rumors abound that George Mitchell might be MidEast envoy instead of Ross. Still no official word that there even will be an envoy to Iran, but this is encouraging. Ross has become a controversial pick--we should continue this line of discussion and sow the seeds of doubt in Ross' appointment for Iran envoy.

[note: It appears the Iran envoy--if there will be one--will be decided on in the coming day(s). On our conference call 2 weeks ago, we discussed how some groups would take the lead in pushing against Ross very aggressively. I haven't seen much besides blogs and a few opinion articles. If anyone is willing/able to make a bigger push, now is the time. I will send around a resource packet that was put together to provide groups with ammunition.]

2. Legislative Update

- a. Ros-Lehtinen sanctions bill, H.R. 485 has been introduced. Also HR 334, H. Res. 33 from Jackson-Lee and Lee respectively. Thanks to Lara for sending those out to the lists as they're introduced. Obviously, Congress has other priorities right now, so it's unlikely there will be any movement on any of these soon.
- b. We do expect there to be a bill blocking gasoline shipments to Iran in a more palatable way that HConRes 362 did last summer. Any info would be appreciated if anyone is hearing about movement on this idea.
- c. Conyers is rounding up bipartisan momentum before he introduces a resolution calling for an incidents-at-sea agreement with Iran.
- d. We decided to push Berman, others in the House to write a letter to Obama endorsing an interests section. Also, getting the 7 senators who wrote the letter to Bush to resubmit it to Obama.

3. Vote on coalition membership criteria

We approved a plan for membership criteria (below). On the website, the “coordinating committee” will list the active organizations. Beneath that, there will be a link to another page listing “supporting organizations.”

4. Completed recommendations to Obama, update

I have delivered our recommendations to Ellen Laipson, the Iran coordinator from the now defunct transition team. She said she’ll pass it along to Denis McDonough to request an in-person meeting. It’s probably impossible in the near term, but if they want to hear from us, they’ll bring us in.

5. Coalition Hill Reception - Tentative date: Feb. 11

We’re planning to hold an after-work reception on the Hill, tentatively scheduled for Feb. 11. My goal is to reintroduce our coalition to lawmakers and staff, making it clear that there is widespread support for Obama’s plan to engage Iran. We’ll also have a few remarks from a couple of experts from the Joint Statement, and possibly a member of Congress or two. I’m hopeful that we will bring in a number of new groups to officially join the coalition prior to this event. I’m in ongoing conversations with the US Chamber of Commerce, and will keep you updated as developments unfold.

6. Begin discussion for Congressional recommendations

Rather than develop a publication similar to our recommendations to Obama, we have decided to outline our legislative goals for the year in a more informal way. We’ll have a handout of some kind, but it won’t be a formal paper for submission. More details will follow regarding the structure of this project.

Our legislative goals for the 111th Congress:

1. No new sanctions until diplomacy is underway
2. Congress should establish benchmarks for Iran to meet, after which it will support rolling back existing sanctions
3. End the democracy fund as we know it (with suggestions for an alternative)
4. Negotiate an incidents-at-sea agreement with Iran
5. Make it easier for humanitarian groups and charities to do business in Iran (reform OFAC procedures)

This, along with opening an interests section and (obviously) beginning diplomacy with Iran, will feed into our larger framework of engagement.

I would like to convene a working group meeting next week to discuss this project further. If you are interested in volunteering to help with this, please let me know PDisney@niacouncil.org.

Attending:

Patrick Disney (*National Iranian American Council*)
Mike Amitay (*Open Society Policy Center*)
Anthony Wilson (*Open Society Policy Center*)
Michael Ostrolenk (*American Conservative Defense Alliance*)
Ed Martin (*American Friends Service Committee*)
Stephen McInerney (*Project on Middle East Democracy*)
Richard Parker (*American Foreign Policy Project*)
Richard Sawaya (*USA*Engage*)
David Elliott (*National Iranian American Council*)
Alissa Wilson (*American Friends Service Committee*)
Peter Crail (*Arms Control Association*)

Calling:

Rebecca Griffin (*Peace Action West*)
Jill Parillo (*Physicians for Social Responsibility*)
Kate Gould (*FCNL*)
Lara Friedman (*Americans for Peace Now*)
Laicie Olson (*Physicians for Social Responsibility*)
Dane Von Breichenruchardt (*US Bill of Rights Foundation*)

Standards for participation in the Campaign for a New American Policy on Iran

The Campaign for a New American Policy on Iran pursues a negotiated solution to the conflict between the United States and Iran. As such, we strive to have the greatest possible influence over the policymaking process. By combining our various organizations' manpower, resources, and talent, we aim to implement an aggressive policy agenda in furtherance of our collective goals.

Organizations involved in the Campaign for a New American Policy on Iran will be divided into two categories

- A "Coordinating Committee" will include organizations in good standing that satisfy the standards for participation listed below.
- "Supporting Organizations" will include other organizations wishing to endorse the activities and principles of the Campaign but not able to satisfy the standards for full participation in Campaign activities.

In order to ensure the greatest chances for successful advocacy on our issues, the organizations that make up the Campaign for a New American Policy on Iran will be of the highest quality. Therefore:

- Organizations will share in the declared objectives of the Campaign for New American Policy on Iran.
- Organizations will take part in and contribute to Campaign activities such as public events, advocacy efforts, grassroots projects, and information sharing.
- Organizations will attend monthly Campaign meetings and assist in the planning, development, and execution of Campaign projects.
- Organizations will share news, analysis, commentary, and information on relevant matters with other Campaign partners via the Campaign listserv found at <http://groups.google.com/group/new-iran-policy-coordinating-committee?hl=en>. This listserv is private, open to Campaign participants only, and confidential; as such it should provide a candid forum for communication and cooperation on any and all relevant matters.
- Organizations will consent to be listed as an affiliated organization on the Campaign website and occasional Campaign materials, unless otherwise arranged with the Campaign coordinator.
- Organizations wishing to become coalition partners must make arrangements with the Campaign coordinator who, in consultation with coalition partners, will review the request. Decisions regarding accession of new organizations will be made based on the perceived value of the requesting group's contribution to the furtherance of Campaign goals and objectives.