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**From:** Trita Parsi [tparsi@niacouncil.org]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 07, 2009 10:55 AM  
**To:** Patrick Disney; new-iran-policy-coordinating-committee@googlegroups.com; IranPWG@yahooroups.com  
**Subject:** Re: Response to Ross as Iran envoy

Just to add to Patrick's points: Coming out strongly against him will likely also make it more difficult for him to go the neo-con way. The pressure should be on him. He is so obviously conflicting with Obama's views so we could make that very clear - criticize him, without criticising Obama.

Also, by being on record now, we protect ourselves for the time when Ross does screw up - then our criticism will be consistent with what we've said all along, and will be able to defend ourselves against any attacks that our views on Ross may resemble Tehran's.

Love to hear other ideas and views.

Sincerely,  
Trita Parsi, PhD  
President

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

From: pdisney@niacouncil.org

Date: Wed, 7 Jan 2009 18:33:03  
To: <new-iran-policy-coordinating-committee@googlegroups.com>; <IranPWG@yahooroups.com>  
Subject: Response to Ross as Iran envoy

All,

As the rumors appear to be more substantiated by the hour, I think we should start a conversation about what our response will be if Dennis Ross is named Iran envoy.

I should be clear--I think we can still influence the selection by submitting our recommendation as soon as possible. However, if it does prove to be Ross, we have to make a choice as to how to respond.

NIAC is obviously still formulating a plan, but we're exploring the idea of coming out publicly, and relatively strongly, against Ross. We would make it clear that we prefer to work with Obama, and that Ross does not align with Obama's plan to change America's approach. Obviously, there are pro's and con's to any strategy, but if it's simply impossible for us to work with Ross, we should be in a position to say I told you so after he messes everything up. But I'd like to hear others' thoughts.

Again, this is a brainstorm rather than a concrete plan. I'd like for all of us to coordinate our message as much as possible. So let's discuss things now and get prepared before things move ahead.

Thanks very much.

-p

January 7, 2009, 10:21 AM

Obama

Picks Foreign Envoys

<<http://www.cbsnews.com/blogs/2009/01/07/politics/politicalhotsheet/entry4703895.shtml>>

Posted by Michelle

Levi

Transition officials confirm to CBS News' Marc Ambinder that President-elect Obama has asked Dennis Ross, Richard Haas, and Richard Holbrooke, to serve as his chief emissaries to world hot spots. Ross and Holbrooke both served in senior Clinton administration roles. Haas had senior posts in the Bush administration from 2001 to 2003 and in the administration of President George H.W. Bush.

It's expected that Ross will be assigned the Iran portfolio, that Holbrooke, the hard-headed architect of the Dayton Peace Accords, will take the difficult Southwest Asia portfolio, including India, Afghanistan and Pakistan, and that Haas will deal with the Middle East.

Each men's turf is still in flux, so these early assignments are not firm.

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