

Unknown

From: Patrick Disney [PDisney@niacouncil.org]
Sent: Wednesday, January 07, 2009 11:43 AM
To: 'Mike Amitay'; 'jparillo@psr.org'; 'new-iran-policy-coordinating-committee@googlegroups.com'
Subject: RE: Response to Ross as Iran envoy

I think publicly criticizing his selection will definitely make it harder for us to work with him, which is why I originally said that our response will depend in part on whether we think we will be able to work with him regardless. I don't think anyone wants to come out so strongly against him that it will close the door to the entire administration, as that would be foolish. But if we can't work with Ross anyway, objecting to him doesn't cost us anything.

It would be a chore, but there may be a middle line where we can object to Ross but keep the door open to the rest of Obama's team. It's tough to shut an envoy out of the process, but our community's response could nudge him a little closer to our side than he might otherwise be if left to his own devices.

-patrick

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

From: Mike Amitay [mailto:mamitay@osi-dc.org]
Sent: Wednesday, January 07, 2009 2:35 PM
To: jparillo@psr.org; PDisney@niacouncil.org; new-iran-policy-coordinating-committee@googlegroups.com
Subject: RE: Response to Ross as Iran envoy

Ross has not worked extensively on Iran, though his most recent employer WINEP, is a "think-tank" created by AIPAC leadership in the 1980s. As Jill points out, a most troubling aspects of his limited Iran-related resume is his role in crafting Bi-Partisan Policy Council report and prominence on Advisory Board of United Against a Nuclear Iran. (Holbrooke also serves on this body). UANI is a right-wing "pro-Israel" PR effort established to push a more militant US policy towards Iran. If in fact Ross appointment confirmed, I find this deeply troubling. One question to consider, however, is whether publicly objecting to Ross would damage our ability to work with him and others in USG in the future.

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

From: new-iran-policy-coordinating-committee@googlegroups.com [mailto:new-iran-policy-coordinating-committee@googlegroups.com] On Behalf Of Jill Parillo
Sent: Wednesday, January 07, 2009 2:03 PM
To: PDisney@niacouncil.org; new-iran-policy-coordinating-committee@googlegroups.com; IranPWG@yahooroups.com
Subject: RE: Response to Ross as Iran envoy

On Ross, I sent an email earlier, but I would like to add:

Engagement with Iran is aimed at reducing tension in US-Iranian relations, to avoid war and build confidence, so to get to a point where together we can develop common policies

that will US and Iranian concerns.

If someone is sent to the talks (like when Burns was) who could increase tension, the policy of engagement as a solution to the Iran challenge will not be a success.

We should talk to those that know Ross well and his policies, and ability to negotiate in a peaceful fair manner.

In spending time as part of the Department of Disarmament Affairs and at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, I sat through several high level negotiations where country Ambassadors walked out of the room because of Bush Administration officials being very rude. The right person and the right policy are important.

We need to also pay attention to who the envoy will report to, in this case it is Clinton, not Obama.

I have never met Ross in person, so I will not judge if he is a good or bad pick. However, I can say I have concerns, since he signed onto the attached paper which says, "WE BELIEVE A MILITARY STRIKE IS A FEASIBLE OPTION.....the United States will need to augment its military presence in the region. This should commence the first day the new President enters office." I am taking this out of context, so please look at this section for yourself, but in any case, it is concerning.

Best,

Jill

PS. I am off to speak in Italy until Jan 19-Pugwash Conference, so I may not be available for much of the next 10 days. Thanks

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

From: new-iran-policy-coordinating-committee@googlegroups.com [mailto:new-iran-policy-coordinating-committee@googlegroups.com] On Behalf Of pdisney@niacouncil.org
Sent: Wednesday, January 07, 2009 1:33 PM
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>](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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