

# IRAN

## MYTHS and FACTS

*How would people in the U.S. react to a vast deployment of foreign navy ships—some armed with hundreds of nuclear weapons—in the Gulf of Mexico?*

**Myth: Iran has a nuclear weapons program and has acknowledged its existence.**

“... They’ve declared they want to have a nuclear weapon to destroy people, some in the Middle East.”—*President George Bush, March 2008*

**Fact: Iran has repeatedly declared unequivocally that it is not seeking nuclear weapons.**

After numerous intrusive inspections of Iranian nuclear facilities—more than 2,700 person-hours of inspections—the International Atomic Energy Agency has stated that there is “no evidence” that Iran has a nuclear weapons program. “We have not come to see any undeclared activities or weaponization of their program.”—*IAEA Director General, Mohammad El-Baradei, Sept. 2007*

**Myth: Iran is a danger to its neighbors and other countries.**

“Iran’s policy still poses a threat to the Gulf States.”—*Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, Dec. 2007*

“Iran is a threat to world peace.”—*President George Bush, Jan. 2008*

**Fact: Since its 1979 revolution, Iran has not attacked or invaded any of its neighbors.** During the same 30 years, the U.S. has attacked and invaded several countries, including Grenada, Panama, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and Iraq. Israel has attacked Lebanon and Syria.

**Myth: The U.S. is promoting democracy in Iran.**

**Fact: In 1953, the U.S. destroyed democracy in Iran** when the CIA carried out a coup, overthrew Prime Minister Mossadegh’s democratically elected government and installed a brutal dictator, the Shah. Over the next 25 years, the U.S.-trained Savak secret police tortured and executed tens of thousands of people, while the country’s oil resources were turned over to Big Oil. According to Amnesty International, the Savak had “the worst human rights record on the planet” and the number and variety of torture techniques used by the Savak were “beyond belief.” The main “democratic” forces receiving U.S. funding are terrorist organizations such as the MEK and Jondollah.

**Myth: Iran is in breach of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, while the international community abides by it.**

“...It needs to be understood that Iran has not been in compliance with its international obligations.”—*Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Jan. 2005*

**Fact: Numerous IAEA reports have indicated that Iran is in compliance with the NPT.** The NPT entitles its signatories to the peaceful development of nuclear energy and obligates nuclear-armed nations to dismantle their nuclear weapons.

The U.S., Britain and France, the countries most insistent on sanctions against Iran, are in breach of the NPT having not dismantled their nuclear weapons in the 40 years since the NPT was ratified, and none are being sanctioned. The U.S. is also violating the NPT by developing new, more advanced nuclear weapons. Israel, Pakistan and India already have nuclear bombs, none are signatories of the NPT, and none are being sanctioned.

**Myth: The international community is united in the demand that Iran must halt its nuclear program or face even harsher sanctions.**

**Fact: The UN Security Council only reflects the dictates of the most powerful nations.** The Non-aligned Movement, a body comprising 120 member states, 60% of the United Nations, has asserted Iran’s right to nuclear development. In the July 2008 NAM conference in Tehran, of the 115 member states present, over 100 voted for a resolution asserting Iran’s right to peaceful nuclear activities.

**Myth: Iran has announced that it wants to “wipe Israel off the map”.**

**Fact: Iran has never threatened Israel, other than in retaliation for being attacked.** This myth was launched in Oct. 2005 when President Ahmadinejad stated: “Imam [Khomeini] said that this regime occupying Jerusalem must vanish from the page of time.” This is a quotation of an oft-repeated slogan by Khomeini against the state of Israel. It is not a statement of intent to attack Israel, nor an indication of a plan to annihilate Jewish people.

In contrast, U.S. and Israeli officials have made repeated and direct threats: "If Iran continues its nuclear arms program ... we will attack it."—*Israel's Deputy Prime Minister, Shaoul Mofaz, June 2008*

"If you so much as dream of attacking Israel, before you even finish dreaming there won't be an Iran anymore."—*Infrastructure Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer, June 2008*

President Bush and presidential candidates Obama and McCain have repeatedly stated that "all options are on the table" in dealing with Iran. In this obvious reference to a military attack, they have refused to rule out use of nuclear weapons.

**Myth: Iran has undertaken threatening and dangerous military maneuvers while the U.S. has been safeguarding and maintaining security in the region.**

**Fact: The United States has repeatedly carried out war games, using aircraft carriers, warships and nuclear powered submarines in the Persian/Arabian Gulf, off the coast of Iran. The obvious intent of these war games is to threaten Iran.** Military maneuvers conducted by

Iran, on Iranian territory and in Iranian waters, are intended to dissuade the U.S. and Israel from attacking Iran. It is not Iran that is conducting military maneuvers off the coast of Florida. It is the U.S. that sees as its prerogative to go anywhere and everywhere on the globe and intervene militarily.

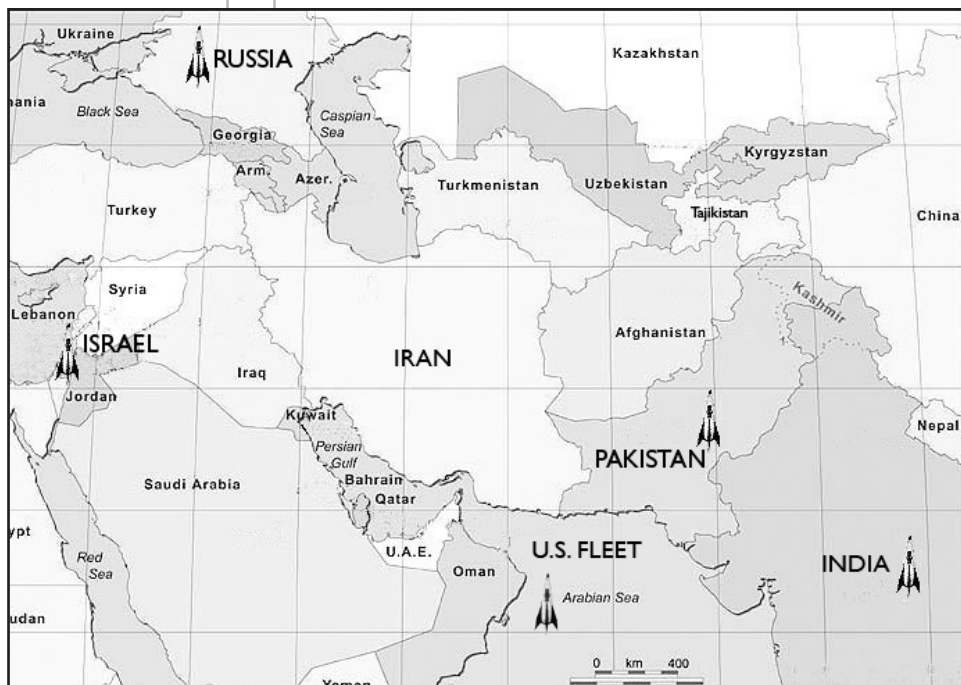
**Myth: Iran refuses to negotiate in good faith and is unwilling to make concessions.**

**Fact: Iran has always declared its eagerness to negotiate and called for negotiations with no pre-conditions.** As a show of good faith, between Nov. 2004 and Aug. 2005, Iran voluntarily suspended its nuclear program during its negotiations with the EU3 (England, France and Germany). When it became obvious that the EU3, backed by the United States, offered nothing and demanded an effective end to the Iranian nuclear program, Iran ended its voluntary suspension and resumed its nuclear work, still under the monitoring of IAEA inspectors. During Iran's voluntary suspension, *Asia Times Online* reported that some European diplomats, off the record, admitted that the package offered to Iran was "an empty box of chocolates ... there is nothing else we can offer ... the Americans simply wouldn't let us."

**Myth: Iran is planning for an ethnic cleansing of Jewish people.**

"It's 1938 and Iran is Germany... he [Iranian President

Ahmadinejad] is preparing another Holocaust for the Jewish state."—*Former Israeli prime minister and leader of the Likud Party, Benjamin Netanyahu, Nov. 2006*



*Iran is surrounded by nuclear armed states.*

**Fact: Iran has a population of approximately 25,000 Jews, the largest Jewish community in the Middle East outside of Israel.** There are synagogues in many Iranian cities where Jewish people practice their faith freely. Jews in Iran have an elected representative in parliament who states: "Fortunately, we have no problem in the Jewish community's living conditions. This question has been asked by many—if there was ... any change in conditions for religious minorities, especially Jews? We always answered fortunately and happily that there was no change ..."—*Jewish member of Iran's Parliament, Morris Motamed*

**Myth: If Iran ever does build nuclear weapons, it will start using them and the entire region will go up in flames.**

**Fact: It is irrational to assume that if Iran did have nuclear bombs, it would drop them on Israel or other countries.** Iran knows full well that the destructive capacity of the U.S., with both conventional and nuclear weapons, is unparalleled and that Iran's use of nuclear weapons would result in the annihilation of the entire country. Israel alone has over 200 undeclared nuclear warheads, compared to Iran which has none.

If Iran did have nuclear weapons, it would make Iran and the Middle-East safer in that it would discourage the U.S. and Israel from attacking Iran or using their nuclear weapons "preemptively."

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