



Support for Iran Nuclear Deal

LA Jews for Peace Policy Statement

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The agreement negotiated between the **P5+1 (United States, United Kingdom, France, Russia, China, Germany, and the European Union)** and **Iran** is a good deal because it diplomatically achieves a halt to Iran's real or imagined nuclear bomb program for ten to fifteen years. It offers assurances based on the most intrusive international inspections ever devised – ones far more comprehensive than current IAEA inspections to enforce Iran's ratification of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. In exchange, the UN will incrementally drop sanctions related to Iran's nuclear program.

No alternative to the present deal will stop an Iranian bomb and bring security to Americans, Israelis, and the world. If the deal is rejected, Iran will be free to pursue its nuclear program, and that will trigger a U.S./Israeli military strike which could lead to a regional war and unimaginable human suffering. This is not an acceptable option.

Although the agreement is focused on Iran's nuclear program, it also marks a break in the cold war between Iran and the West originating in the 1979 overthrow of the Shah and 1980 hostage crisis. This nuclear deal could lead to Iran rejoining the community of nations, a development leading to a more peaceful world.

Almost the entire world supports the deal, as shown by the UN Security Council's unanimous adoption of it, including a "yes" vote by Jordan, an Arab state now a Security Council member.

In contrast, there are only two forces opposing the agreement: Israeli political leaders and Congressional Republicans and neo-con Democrats, groups that believe in military solutions to foreign policy disputes rather than negotiations.

We find the arguments mustered to oppose the deal particularly unconvincing. We hear that all Israelis oppose the deal, but that is not true. In fact, many prominent Israeli security leaders support the agreement (see back of this sheet). We also hear that Saudi Arabia and other Arab Gulf states oppose it, but that is also not correct. In truth, Saudi King Salman's support was reported by the *NY Times*¹ and other media.

Opponents of the deal say lifting sanctions will give Iran billions to back regional terrorism. Not likely. Iran made major concessions in its nuclear program to get the sanctions lifted because they had devastated its economy. Iranian leaders know their first responsibility is to use this money to improve the lives of their own people.

The real reason U.S. neo-cons and Israeli hawks oppose the Iran deal is that it will enhance Iran's regional role, a development that would restrain U.S. and Israeli military options in the Middle East. That is an outcome we support.

¹ *NY Times*, July 23, 2015 <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/23/world/middleeast/iran-nuclear-deal-saudi-arabia.html>

Israeli Security Leaders Back Iran Nuclear Agreement

(Modified from J Street <http://jstreet.org/israeli-validators-for-the-iran-agreement>)

The Peace and Security Association: Represents hundreds of Israeli security experts, IDF veterans, Mossad, Shin Bet and police “Although the agreement signed in Vienna between the world powers and Iran is not optimal, it should remove the immediate threat of an Iranian break-out leading to a nuclear military capability within a few months... The agreement is expected to lengthen the break-out time to 12 months for at least 10 years.”

Ami Ayalon: Former head of the Shin Bet; former Navy commander-in-chief The agreement is “the best possible alternative from Israel’s point of view, given the other available alternatives... In the Middle East, 10 to 15 years is an eternity, and I don’t believe that 10 or 15 years from now the world will stand by and watch Iran acquire nuclear weapons.”

Efraim Halevy: Former Mossad Director; former Head of the National Security Council “Without an agreement, Iran will be free to act as it wishes, whereas the sanctions regime against it will crumble in any case... if the nuclear issue is of cardinal existential importance, what is the point of canceling an agreement that distances Iran from the bomb?”

Shlomo Ben-Ami: Former Minister of Foreign Affairs and Internal Security “It creates a solid framework to prevent Iran from producing nuclear weapons for the next 10-15 years – and that is a very positive development.”

Dov Tamari: Former Military Intelligence Chief; former head of special operations “The Iran deal is an opportunity to strengthen the ties with the US... we will have positive results only if the government will understand that Israel has to integrate and not to segregate itself from the international community.”

Chuck Freilich: Former Deputy National Security Advisor “This is the agreement that was reached — and despite its faults, it is not a bad one. Crucially, it will contribute to Israel’s security.”

Yitzhak Ben-Yisrael: Chair of Israel’s Space Agency; former IDF general “The agreement is not bad at all, it is even good for Israel... It prevents Iran from getting a nuclear weapon for 15 years.”

Uzi Even: Former lead scientist at Israel’s Dimona nuclear reactor “I am sure the deal that was signed is preferable to the current situation because it delays Iran’s ability to develop a nuclear bomb by at least 15 years and in practice ends its nuclear aspirations.”

Eran Etzion: Former Deputy Head of the National Security Council; former Head of Policy Planning at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs “The agreement prevents Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon for 10-15 years. Obama says and he is right--this agreement is not about trust, it’s about verification. No agreement can be perfect. We live in the real world and it is the best agreement that they could reach.”

Israel Ziv: Former Major General “This agreement is the best among all other alternatives, and any military strike – as successful as it may be – would not have delayed even 20% of what the agreement will delay.”

Eli Levite: Former Deputy Director General of Israel’s Atomic Energy Commission “In the next 15 years, if Iran will respect its obligations, Iran won’t be a nuclear country, period. They won’t have the materials. The question is whether they will respect their obligation, and that is the hard question.”

Shelly Yachimovich: MK of the Zionist Union party; former chair of the Labor party “This deal - as flawed and full of holes as it may be - distances Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon. ... We must do what is right to our country even if it’s not popular.”

Zehava Galon: Chair of the Meretz party “We can’t just say that everything is bad and the Western world and Obama don’t understand anything... do we prefer Iran with an agreement or without an agreement? I prefer Iran with an agreement even if it is a bad one.”

Ksenia Svetlova: Zionist Union MK “While Prime Minister Netanyahu continues to attack the agreement, I and many in Israel believe that it’s time to deal with this worrying and uncertain situation in a sensible manner... for this to occur, the unnecessary and harmful fight with the American administration must be terminated.”

Uri Dromi: Former spokesperson for the Israeli government “While the current deal is bad, other scenarios seem worse... Instead of confronting Obama, Israel should take him at his word, that he will work like no other previous administration to safeguard the security of Israel. In that sense, the deal might prove to be a blessing in disguise for Israel.”

Oded Eran: Former Ambassador to the United Nations and to Jordan “It is imperative that Israel realize that though the agreement has become a reality.”