

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 30, 2010

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Clinton:

It is our understanding that Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is seeking authorization to enter the United States next week to address a United Nations (UN) conference on nuclear non-proliferation efforts. Obama Administration officials in the State Department have reportedly indicated that Ahmadinejad's request will likely be granted. This is preposterous, and allowing it to happen will make a mockery of the effort to stop the spread of nuclear weapons to rogue states and terrorist groups. There is simply no compelling reason for Ahmadinejad to be allowed to enter the United States.

As you know, Iran remains a U.S.-designated "state sponsor of international terrorism" under federal law, based on its support for acts of international terrorism. Pursuant to section 306 of the Enhanced Border Security and Visa Entry Reform Act of 2002, P.L. 107-173 (8 U.S.C. § 1735), your Department can deny a nonimmigrant visa to any alien from a country that is so designated, regardless of that alien's official status. As such, the U.S. Government has the legal authority to deny Ahmadinejad's request and bar his entry – even if he is transiting only to the UN (See 8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(15)(C); 1182(d)(8); (f), and (3)(A) thru (C)). We ask that you exercise that authority. Alternatively, if you insist on allowing Ahmadinejad to enter the country, we request that you severely restrict his movement, limiting it to the UN Headquarters District.

According to your agency's most recent *Country Reports on Terrorism* (April 2009), Iran is in fact "the most significant state sponsor of terrorism" in the world, having "long employed terrorism to advance its key national security and foreign policy interests, which include regime survival, regional dominance, opposition to Arab-Israeli peace, and countering western influence, particularly in the Middle East." Your report specifically indicates that Iran continues to hinder the Middle East peace process by using the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) to arm, train, and fund militants and terrorist organizations, including Hamas, Lebanese Hizballah, and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

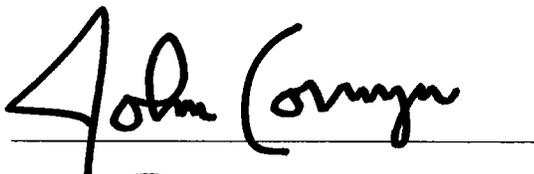
Moreover, the report suggests that Iran and its leaders have directly contributed to the deaths of Americans. It states that Iran's IRGC cultivates and supports certain Iraqi Shi'a militant groups that target U.S., Iraqi, and Coalition forces. Iran has also supplied weapons and training to Taliban members in Afghanistan, threatening both Afghan and NATO troops and undermining our efforts in that country. These actions have certainly increased the number of deaths of American combat troops in these theaters of conflict.

In addition, as both the UN and the U.S. Congress consider the imposition of additional sanctions against Iran—sanctions that you have said should be “crippling”—Iran, defying all warnings from the international community, continues to pursue the acquisition of nuclear weapons. As President Obama recognized when Iran revealed its second uranium enrichment facility near Qom last year, “the size and configuration of this facility is inconsistent with a peaceful program.” Further, Director of National Intelligence Dennis Blair testified to Congress on February 3, 2010, that “Iran is technically capable of producing enough [highly enriched uranium] for a weapon in the next few years.” Ahmadinejad’s motivations to acquire these weapons of mass destruction could not be more apparent, as he unequivocally stated on October 26, 2005, “to those who doubt, to those who ask is it possible or those who do not believe, I say accomplishment of a world without America and Israel is both possible and feasible.”

As UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon recently told reporters, he is “unaware of any concrete ideas” that Ahmadinejad plans to unveil before the UN. Ahmadinejad has been given ample time and opportunity to prove to the world that he is not developing nuclear weapons. Iran, under Ahmadinejad’s leadership, has a documented history of threatening the interests and security of the United States and our allies. Allowing Ahmadinejad to enter the United States would serve only to grant this man a symbolic stage from which to spew his rhetoric against our nation and our allies in the global war on terror.

As head of the State Department, the official agency with responsibility over visa issuance, we strongly urge you, based upon the statutory authorities and facts outlined in this letter, to deny Ahmadinejad entry into the United States. Thank you for your prompt consideration of our request.

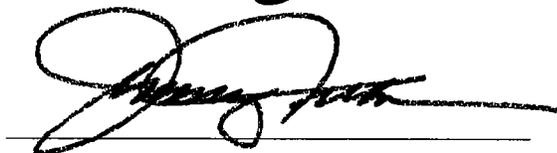
Sincerely,

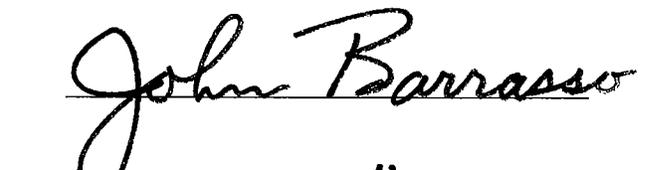


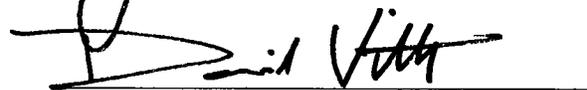


















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