

June 19, 2014

The Honorable Ed Royce  
Chairman  
House Foreign Affairs Committee

The Honorable Eliot Engel  
Ranking Member  
House Foreign Affairs Committee

Dear Chairman Royce and Ranking Member Engel,

We write with regard to the letter you are currently circulating regarding nuclear negotiations with Iran. We agree with you that the White House and Congress should consult closely regarding the nuclear negotiations. While the President has the authority to issue sanctions waivers on a renewable but time-limited basis, lifting sanctions would likely require an act of Congress.

However, as nuclear negotiations with Iran enter a crucial phase, we have serious concerns regarding your letter. As written, it could be understood as implying that, unless a nuclear deal also includes non-nuclear elements on the U.S. agenda with Iran, Congress will refuse to lift any sanctions. The notion that Congress would choose to keep sanctions in place rather than secure an agreement that prevents an Iranian nuclear weapon is alarming, and we urge you to clarify that this is not the implication of your letter.

Demanding that non-nuclear issues be added to the nuclear negotiations at this time will only ensure that we get no deal and face the prospect of an unconstrained Iranian nuclear program or a disastrous war opposed by the American people. Under the Joint Plan of Action, the United States committed to “Comprehensively lift...nuclear-related sanctions...on a schedule to be agreed upon” as part of any comprehensive agreement to the nuclear dispute. As Iran conceded this week, the lifting of sanctions would be implemented over a period of time, contingent on Iran's implementation of its own requirements under a final deal.

A comprehensive agreement that verifiably prevents Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon would be a major national security achievement that would greatly benefit the U.S., as well as its allies, and resolve the issue that Congress has consistently identified as the top priority regarding Iran. It would be a travesty if the very sanctions that Congress enacted under the

premise of stopping Iran from getting nuclear weapons proved to be the obstacle that blocked a nuclear deal.

As the nuclear negotiations intensify in the coming weeks, we hope Congress and the Administration will work together to provide the U.S. with the best possible opportunity to peacefully resolve the nuclear standoff with Iran. This should include leaders in Congress like yourselves making clear that you do not endorse the position that there can be no lifting of sanctions unless a nuclear deal addresses non-nuclear issues. We urge you to clarify that this is not the intent of your letter. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

**Americans for Peace Now**

**Berim**

**Center for Interfaith Engagement of Eastern Mennonite**

**Church of the Brethren, Office of Public Witness**

**Council for a Livable World**

**CREDO**

**Fellowship of Reconciliation**

**Friends Committee on National Legislation**

**Institute for Policy Studies, New Internationalism Project**

**Jewish Voice for Peace**

**Just Foreign Policy**

**Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns**

**MoveOn.org**

**National Council of Churches, USA**

**National Iranian American Council**

**NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby**

**Peace Action**

**Peace Action West**

**Peace Catalyst International**

**Physicians for Social Responsibility**

**Progressive Democrats of America**

**The Shalom Center**

**United for Peace and Justice**

**United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society**

**Win Without War**

**Women's Action for New Directions**

Please direct responses to: 1411 K Street NW #250, Washington, DC 20005