

GRF INTERNATIONAL TASK FORCE ON THE FUTURE OF THE NUCLEAR DEAL WITH IRAN

DECLARATION ON THE JCPOA

17 MARCH 2017

On 4-5 March, the Global Relations Forum (GRF) International Task Force, of which we are all members, held its second and final meeting in Istanbul to reflect on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) - the Iran nuclear deal - concluded by Iran and the P5+1 on 14 July 2015. We noted that despite the predictable challenges of executing an ambitious and technically complex deal, it has so far been implemented successfully.

As confirmed by the IAEA, Iran has taken the steps it had committed to under the JCPOA to reassure the international community about its nuclear program, including through removing 13,000 centrifuges, disposing of all but 300kg of its 8,000kg stockpile of enriched uranium, and extracting the core of the plutonium-fueled research reactor at Arak. The IAEA has begun an inspection and monitoring regime of unprecedented depth and has reported that Iran has kept within the tight limits set out in the agreement.

The P5+1 in turn have rolled back their nuclear-related sanctions as they committed to do. Inevitably it is taking time for international businesses to resume normal trading and investment relations with Iran but we are optimistic that, over time, this will happen.

Despite this, the nuclear agreement has critics in two key capitals: Washington and Tehran. With a change of administration in the US and the impending elections in Iran, it is not difficult to imagine circumstances in which the nuclear agreement could still fail.

As a diverse group of experts - from different nations and with many differing views about the rights and wrongs of the past - none of us hesitated to rally around a few beliefs strongly held by us all.

First and foremost, we were unanimous that although the deal is not perfect, there appears to be no chance of securing a better one at present. It looks highly unlikely that either side could be compelled to enter a new negotiation which would lead to a different result. It is this or no deal in the near future. And the latter would bring us back to a path that could easily lead to miscalculation and a new disaster in the Middle East.

Second, all parties to the deal have therefore to fulfill their obligations in good faith. The nuclear deal will be durable only if it brings benefit to both sides: that means Iran continuing to deliver on its nuclear commitments and the P5+1 doing all it can to ensure sanctions relief in practice as well as in theory. We call on the parties to the deal to reaffirm their full commitment to it: silence is not enough.

Finally, we believe there are ways in which the international community could build on the JCPOA to increase confidence and therefore security. We look forward to releasing a report with concrete ideas in this direction later this year.

Task Force Members

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Ambassador (Ret.); Former Special Envoy of the Prime Minister for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Issues

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GRF International Task Force on the Future of the Nuclear Deal with Iran

The Global Relations Forum (GRF) International Task Force on the Future of the Nuclear Deal with Iran was launched in 2016 to focus on maintaining the positive momentum of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) on Iran's nuclear program. With its high-level international membership, the Task Force set out to identify strategies and possibly new institutional structures that can preempt the build-up of corrosive pressures on the JCPOA both within and from outside the region, while gradually steering the agreement towards broader constructive use.

Co-chaired by GRF Vice-Chairman and President, Mr. Memduh Karakullukçu; Harvard University Belfer Center International Security Program Director, Dr. Steven E. Miller; and Former Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of India for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Issues, Ambassador Rakesh Sood; the Task Force brought together 14 experts from China, France, India, Iran, Israel, Russia, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States. The Task Force study was also joined by four expert rapporteurs from China, Germany, Italy and Turkey.

The Task Force set out to hold two meetings in Istanbul to discuss the strategies for preserving the deal and building on its constructive momentum.

The first meeting of the Task Force was held on October 13-14, 2016. The second and final meeting was held on March 4-5, 2017.

The analyses and recommendations of the Task Force will be consolidated into a consensus report, which will be published later in 2017.

ABOUT GRF

Global Relations Forum (GRF) is an independent, nonpartisan membership association based in Istanbul founded in 2009 by Turkish leaders who have assumed prominent roles in Turkey and abroad. The founding members include former ministers of foreign affairs, university presidents, central bank governors, retired ambassadors as well as business leaders, scholars and artists.

GRF is committed to being a platform for engaging, informing and stimulating its members and all interested individuals in all matters related to international affairs and global issues.

GRF undertakes policy work on current global issues ranging from energy to trade and from security to education by launching Task Forces and publishing Policy Reports which synthesize the contributions of its members. Within the framework of our International Dialogue initiatives, GRF members work with distinguished counterparts from other countries to address international challenges that threaten the global order and contribute to international policy processes.

GRF also builds communities of young policy thinkers through its programs engaging undergraduate and graduate students, as well as accomplished young professionals.

More detailed information about GRF is available on our website, www.gif.org.tr.