



## Iran

### Ethical/Theological Perspective

“They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore” (Micah 4:3) is a goal toward which we can strive.

*“Returning violence for violence multiplies violence, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars.” (MLK)*

### Historical Background

The US and Iran have had a troubled relationship over the past 54 years. In 1953 the CIA overthrew Mohammed Mossadegh over his nationalization of oil. The Shah, placed in power through US efforts, was encouraged by US to expand non-oil energy and a US college trains first Iranian nuclear engineers.

When Shah was toppled in 1979, new leaders decided Iran did not need nuclear energy and US stops supplying highly enriched uranium. Then in 1985, Iran, Syria and Lebanon say their countries should develop nuclear weapons to counter Israeli threat.

By 2001 the US Nuclear Posture Review expanded US policy on use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon states. In 2002 President Bush labeled Iran a part of the “axis of evil.”



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Status of Iranian Nuclear Program

- C Iran’s nuclear power program is more transparent than most other countries.
- C International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) nuclear inspectors are in Iran on a regular basis.
- C Iran is complying with letter, if not spirit, of its agreement with IAEA.
- C Iran has indicated it would be open to more intrusive inspections.
- C Iran’s nuclear program is years from achieving capacity to build nuclear bomb.

Current Political Situation

- C Iran has proposed an IAEA supervised regional uranium enrichment facility.
- C Iran continues to negotiate with European countries and expressed interest in direct talks with the United States.
- C Bills have been introduced (S759/ HJ.Res 14) that would require full congressional debate and vote before the president could take military action against Iran
- C S759 - Neither NY Senator signed.
- C HJ Res. 14 - signed by Bishop, Meeks, Towns, Maloney, McNulty.

What would help

- C immediately engage in face-to-face talks.
- C cease language using "enemy" images.
- C promote people-to-people exchanges, including religious leaders, members of Parliament/Congress, and civil society.
- C Pass S. 759 and H.J.Res 14.

(5/07)

Member Denominations

American Baptist Churches, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Empire Baptist Missionary Convention, Episcopal Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Presbyterian Church (USA), Reformed Church in America, Religious Society of Friends, United Church of Christ, The United Methodist Church.

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