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Middle East Brief

Nuclear Decision-Making in Iran: A Rare Glimpse

Dr. Chen Kane

On April 19, 2006, Iran's former secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, Hassan Rohani, publicly criticized his successor's handling of their country's nuclear negotiations with the West. In what was, for Iran, a rare public expression of discontent, he called for "more balance in our decisions and [the need] to approach the issue with more reason and less emotion. . . ." "Unfortunately," he added, "with the new [Iranian] administration, [our] nuclear policy and tactics were changed. Although we had some success, we have been forced to pay a hefty price."

In using the word "success," Rohani was probably referring to the announcement made by Iran's president, Mahmud Ahmadinejad, on April 11 that his country had begun to enrich uranium in Natanz to a level of 3.5 percent. Together with media reports of United States preparations for a possible military operation to abort Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons, Ahmadinejad's statement brought tensions between Tehran and the West to new heights. Yet in this developing drama, the West seems continuously baffled by the manner in which decisions on national security affairs are made in Iran. Who makes these decisions and what they are based on, especially with regard to Iran's nuclear policy, remains a mystery to many.

An earlier speech made by Hassan Rohani, an English-language translation of which has only now become available, provides a rare opportunity to find answers to these questions.¹ It sheds light on Iran's decision-making system as well as on its nuclear negotiations strategy, thus also making clear the difference between the negotiations strategy executed by Rohani and the "bull in a China shop" strategy pursued by Iran's new leadership.

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Titled "Beyond the Challenges Facing Iran and the IAEA Concerning the Nuclear Dossier," the speech was delivered to the Supreme Cultural Revolution Council,

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the highest body in Iran for policy and decision making in connection with culture, education, and research. Mohammad Khatami, Iran's president at the time the speech was delivered, was present when Rohani gave the talk another indication of its significance.

Hassan Rohani is an Iranian politician and cleric. For some 16 years, he served as the secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC), where he was one of two representatives of the supreme leader, Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Khamenei. His speech is particularly important given that from October 2003 to August 2005 he also served as Iran's chief negotiator in the nuclear talks with the United Kingdom, France, and Germany (the so-called EU3). After the election of President Ahmadinejad, Rohani was succeeded as secretary of the SNSC and chief negotiator by Ali Larijani, the other representative of the supreme leader in the SNSC. Rohani is also a member of the Assembly of Experts, which has the power to elect and remove the supreme leader. He is often described by Western sources as a moderate, or as a pragmatic conservative. He is considered close both to the supreme leader and to the former president, Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, who now heads the Expediency Council.

Rohani's speech was delivered while he was still serving as chief negotiator with the EU3, and it provides a unique glimpse into and deeper understanding of Iran's nuclear strategy and policy as it has evolved since December 2002, when an Iranian exile group revealed two covert Iranian nuclear sites.² It is remarkable in the extent to which it illuminates Iran's nuclear policy on three fronts: Iran's negotiations strategy, its concealment efforts, and its domestic politics.

The contexts in which the speech was given and subsequently released for publication are also important. It was most probably delivered between October to November 2004 in defense of the regime's decision to cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), sign the Additional Protocol, negotiate with the EU3, and suspend enrichment and centrifuge manufacturing.³ The publication of the speech in September 2005 may have had other purposes, however. The speech was published in *Rahbord*, a journal edited by Rohani and published by the Center for Strategic Research, which is headed by former president Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani. The center is a think tank affiliated with Iran's influential Expediency Council, which is responsible for resolving differences between the Iranian parliament and the Council of Guardians. The Expediency Council also serves as a consultative council to the supreme leader.

The publication of the speech may be another manifestation of the aforementioned tension between two camps within Iran: President Ahmadinejad's hardliner group, which won the last election and pursues the current confrontational negotiation strategy, versus the pragmatists favor a more nuanced strategy. Former presidents Rafsanjani and Mohammad Khatami head the latter camp, which lost the August 2005 election. They have spoken out against the recent undoing of their work—and particularly of their painstaking efforts to maintain Iran's relations with the international community—by President Ahmadinejad.

Iran's Negotiations Strategy

As background, Rohani begins by recounting the history of Iran's nuclear program. Iran, he says, began work on mastering the nuclear fuel cycle in 1987–88. Efforts to jump-start the program by purchasing technology and nuclear fuel cycle capabilities from the Soviet Union and China had proven unsuccessful, however,

so Iran turned to developing indigenous capabilities and to purchasing nuclear technologies from the black market. From a middleman, later revealed as part of the Pakistani A. Q. Khan's network, Iran bought fuel cycle technologies and P-2 centrifuge designs.⁴ During 1999–2000, Iran decided to become more active in upgrading its nuclear capabilities. The Iranian Atomic Energy Agency was given greater financial resources and was allowed more flexible budgetary procedures in the interest of advancing the program and constructing new facilities.

In September 2003, after Iran failed to meet the International Atomic Energy Agency's repeated requests for clarification and access, the IAEA Board of Governors adopted by consensus a strongly worded resolution. Believing that it had been taken "to the doorstep of the UN Security Council,"⁵ Iran created a committee in the Secretariat of the SNSC that included the heads of all relevant government ministries. After extensive deliberations, Iran's top decision makers concluded that even if they fully cooperated with the IAEA and addressed its concerns, Iran's case would still be sent to the Security Council. The debate, therefore, turned to the optimal means of delaying such a referral. The resulting strategy was thus aimed at delaying referral to the Security Council while at the same time preparing the Iranian public and economy for the possibility of sanctions. Efforts also continued apace to solve the remaining technical problems facing Iran's nuclear program.

Rohani stresses that during the negotiations with the EU3, Iran agreed to suspend activities only in areas it did not have technical problems. He acknowledges that the Isfahan Uranium Conversion facility was completed during these negotiations: "While we were talking with the Europeans in Tehran, we were installing equipment in parts of the facility in Isfahan. . . . in fact, by creating a calm environment, we were able to complete the work in Isfahan. Today, we can convert yellowcake into UF4 and UF6, and this is a very important matter."⁶

Rohani also points to the progress made since the beginning of the EU3 negotiations (and up to the date the speech was delivered). Iran, he says, "had something like 150 centrifuges [at the beginning of the EU3 talks], but today we have about 500 centrifuges that are ready and operational. We could increase that number to 1,000. We would not have any problems, should we decide to do so."⁷ Iran has also reached "the point where everybody knows that, if we decide to end the suspension, we will be able to have 3.5 percent enriched uranium within a few months' time."⁸ The main achievement, as Rohani explains in his speech, is that a "country that can enrich uranium to about 3.5 percent will also have the capability to enrich it to about 90 percent"⁹—that is, to weapons-grade material.

Rohani emphasizes that overcoming the nuclear program's technical obstacles would have important implications for Iran's standing in the international community: "This is good for our international reputation and shows that we have made good technological progress and have been successful in the area of technology. . . . It is going to be a very effective and important statement."¹⁰ It would also, he observes, present the world with Iran's nuclear program as a *fait accompli*, which underscores that Iran's current and previous regimes shared one goal: mastering the nuclear fuel cycle. "If one day we are able to complete the fuel cycle and the world sees that it has no choice—that we do possess the technology—then the situation will be different. The world did not want Pakistan to have an atomic bomb or Brazil to have the fuel cycle, but Pakistan built its bomb and Brazil has its fuel cycle, and the world started to work with them. Our problem is that we have not achieved either one, but we are standing at the threshold. As for building the atomic bomb, we never wanted to move in that direction and we have not yet completely developed our fuel cycle capability. This also happens to be our main problem."¹¹

The speech also sheds light on how Iran perceives the various key players involved in the crisis: the United States, the EU3, Russia, and China. The American goal is to bring Iran to the Security Council based on the nuclear issue. But Rohani perceives the United States as having a broader agenda. "We would not come out of the UN Security Council with only a solution to the nuclear case. They intend to raise all of their issues, such as the Middle East, terrorism, and the rest, there."¹²

Interestingly, Rohani identifies what he considers a sharp divergence of strategic interests between the United States and Europe with regard to Iran. The Europeans might resist the United States' focus on the Security Council because, according to Rohani, the "Europeans fear that the Americans, over time and through increasing pressure, might be able to break the regime in Iran, and this would not be to their advantage. It is not in their interest to see a pro-American system in Iran."¹³ The reason for these divergent interests is that "Iran provides [the Europeans] with breathing room in this region. At the present time, they have nowhere else [to go].... The only country that is independent and free, and that the Europeans can talk with, is Iran."¹⁴

Rohani doubts the chances for a positive conclusion to the negotiations with the EU3. He opines that the structural challenge inherent in the negotiations with the EU3 is the deep mistrust between the parties: "We do not have any trust in them. Unfortunately, they do not trust us, either. They think we are out to dupe them, and we think

in the same way—that they want to trick and cheat us. Therefore, we should build trust, step by step and in practice.”¹⁵ Rohani also concludes that, aside from gaining time, there is not much to be gained from negotiating with the EU3. He regards the Europeans’ offer to support Iran’s membership in the World Trade Organization; to invest in Iran’s civil aviation, agriculture, and oil and gas industries; and to conclude a new trade agreement with Iran as providing “no immediate benefit to us.” He also argues that these agreements, even if potentially beneficial, would “take a long time to conclude.”¹⁶

Rohani also acknowledges that despite the aforementioned difference of interests, an international consensus had emerged over time against Iran’s pursuit of nuclear cycle capabilities. According to Rohani, Europe, the U.S., China, and Russia “are all alike. . . there is no doubt that they do not want us to have advanced technology.” Therefore, “when it comes to the fuel cycle, the Europeans are as determined to see us not have it, as the United States.”¹⁷

The same applies, he observes, to the Russians, who “do not want us to have the fuel cycle either, both for economic reasons, [so that they can] sell us fuel and have Iran as a market, and for security reasons.”¹⁸ China does not want Iran to have these capabilities either, he notes, although “they seem to have a softer position.”¹⁹ As a result, Rohani sees an opportunity to create a rift between the negotiating parties. This might be possible, he argues, if Iran offers strong parties, such as China, political and economic benefits to reward them for exercising their veto power in the Security Council.

Rohani also recommends the creation of a coalition designed to end Iran’s isolation. This could be achieved, he believes, by collaborating with countries like South Africa and Brazil, who are interested in developing their own fuel cycle capabilities. “We should come up with a formula that these countries can take to the Europeans,” he contends. “In other words, it should not be just us and the Europeans.”²⁰

The Costs of Concealment

Rohani provides his audience with a revealing account of Iran’s handling of the IAEA inspectors. He explains that Iran had no choice but to let the IAEA enter its undeclared facilities. “In some cases we were forced . . . to invite [IAEA Director General Dr. Mohamed] ElBaradei to come and visit Natanz. Of course, we did not know precisely how accurate their sampling would be or how contaminated our centers truly were.”²¹ Here he is referring to the fact that during its inspections the IAEA found traces of low and highly enriched uranium in locations where Iran had manufactured, used, or stored centrifuge components.²²

In describing the Iranian strategy vis-à-vis the IAEA inspectors, Rohani notes that a decision was taken “to find a way to present a complete picture of our past nuclear activities without being sent to the UN Security Council.”²³ Rohani denies that Iranian officials lied to the IAEA; but he admits that information was sometimes withheld from the agency. “No, we have not lied. In all cases, we have told them the truth. But in some cases, we may not have disclosed information in a timely manner.”²⁴ The narrative is less definite when Rohani attempts to explain why Iran did not disclose that it had received P-2 centrifuge designs from A.Q. Khan’s black-market network.

Iran’s acquisition of P-2 centrifuge designs was revealed during the secret negotiations on disarmament held in mid-2003 between the United States, the United Kingdom, and Libya. When Libya came clean regarding its nuclear weapons program, it also disclosed the identity of the middleman from A. Q. Khan’s network that it used for procuring nuclear technology. It then came to light that the same middleman also sold designs to Iran, and that Iran had not reported everything that it had acquired from the network. Rohani avers that “we did intend to disclose that transaction in future communications,”²⁵ but he admits that this behavior of concealment created serious damage to Iran’s international credibility, especially vis-à-vis the EU3. “It was a serious blow to that process.”²⁶

Iran was also surprised by the amount of information that the IAEA had obtained about its nuclear program and undeclared activities. Rohani claims that aside from the information the IAEA received from China and Russia on what they sold Iran, important information about undeclared tests was obtained from an Iranian student’s dissertation. In another case, a scholar who participated in a different undeclared project published a paper mentioning it in an international journal.

Domestic Politics

Rohani provides an interesting analysis of Iran’s domestic scene and of the decision-making process, including a description of the way Iran prepared internally for the nuclear negotiations with the EU3 and the IAEA. He begins by acknowledging the significance of the negotiations and Iran’s inexperience on this scale: “We in the Islamic Republic have never had political negotiations with this degree of gravity”²⁷—with such serious implications and with multiple political, legal, technical, and security dimensions. Rohani compares these negotiations with two previous sets of negotiations in which Iran was involved: the Iran–U.S. negotiation during the hostage crisis and negotiating with Iraq after the Iran–Iraq war. These comparisons underscore the seriousness with which the Iranian government regarded the nuclear negotiations.

As in any other country, interagency disagreements within Iran had surfaced as the nuclear crisis broadened. Important differences between the Iranian Atomic Energy Agency and the Foreign Ministry emerged with respect to the seriousness of the crisis, regarding who should lead the diplomatic efforts, and as to what policy should be adopted. While the Iranian Atomic Energy Agency downplayed the importance of the nuclear revelations and the IAEA's requests for inspections, the Foreign Ministry issued a strong warning of "a very difficult road ahead."²⁸

Iran realized in mid-2003 that the gravity of the negotiations required high-level official attention. Though up to that point the Iranian Atomic Energy Agency had handled both the political and technical issues involved, it was felt that this matter "must be addressed at a higher level."²⁹ In mid-2003, the Supreme National Security Council met to discuss the nuclear crisis for the first time. Subsequently, a four-level decision-making process was adopted to review, discuss, and make decisions about the nuclear issue. The first level, headed by a Foreign Ministry executive, was charged with addressing the technical aspects of the nuclear program and the negotiations. The second, headed by the SNSC Secretariat, focused on technical discussions with political implications. A ministerial committee within the SNSC constituted the third level, while the fourth was composed of the top decision makers who were to make all major decisions. It was also decided that one person, Hassan Rohani, should take charge, coordinating and supervising all the departments involved in the nuclear issue.

Rohani's comments on the regime's sensitivity to Iranian public opinion are of special interest. He explains that one of the reasons for seeking to delay Iran's referral to the Security Council was that time was needed to prepare the public and "justify our position."³⁰ "We must cool down and lower the intensity of our propaganda. . . . Whatever we do, we must have the support of the public."³¹ Such sensitivity to public opinion on the part of the government of Iran is not always appreciated in the West.

In response to a question regarding the effects that the nuclear issue had had on Iranian public opinion, Rohani argues that the topic had created too many headlines "in part because of partisan and factional motives and interests. . . . It seems that we have nothing else to do but be preoccupied with the nuclear issue all day and all night."³² He stresses that these intensive discussions and the possibility of Iran's referral to the Security Council had already had a significant impact on Iran's economy.

Rohani apprises his audience that during 2003–04, meetings were held with the economic, security, and

political sectors to prepare them for the possibility that Iran's referral to the Security Council would result in the application of sanctions. He also indicates that as part of these preparations, a "15 sections policy" approach was adopted by the SNSC. It had met with implementation hurdles, however, primarily in the economic realm; and hence the SNSC realized that "the government cannot act within the framework that we have sanctioned." Rohani acknowledges that "we cannot change the people's lives and the entire economy in six months."³³

Analysis: What the Speech Says (and Doesn't)

Rohani's speech deserves close attention by policy makers on three fronts: what it confirms, what was left unspoken, and what new information it reveals.

What the speech confirms. Two working assumptions widely held in the West are confirmed by Rohani's speech. First, the speech reinforces the more cynical view held by some in the West that Iran's main objective in negotiating with the EU3 was simply to gain time. By describing how Iran continued, while it was negotiating, to develop its nuclear program and solve the technical problems it was facing—and by reassuring his audience that Iran had thereby improved its strategic position—Rohani confirmed the assessment that Iran had used the calm atmosphere of negotiations as a smokescreen behind which it continued to deliberately advance its nuclear program.

Rohani's speech also provides justification for the concern that once Iran obtains nuclear fuel cycle technology, it will be able to utilize it as technical and political leverage in negotiations. From a policy standpoint this is particularly worrisome, given that nuclear weapons are mentioned in Rohani's speech only in reference to Iran's mastering of fuel cycle capabilities. As Rohani explained in his speech, the only thing that stands between mastering enrichment technology and obtaining weapons-grade uranium is a political decision to make that transition.³⁴ Similar thinking could be found in Ahmadinejad's April 11, 2006, statement that by reaching 3.5 percent of enrichment, "Iran has joined the nuclear countries of the world." And his April 28 statement, "the Iranian nation's achievement of peaceful nuclear energy is so important that it could change the world equation."³⁵ Such statements will surely bolster policies that seek to prevent Iran from acquiring fuel cycle capabilities.

While many states possess nuclear energy, most of them do not possess nuclear fuel cycle capabilities (e.g., the indigenous capacity to produce nuclear fuel by enrichment of uranium). The main concern about nations acquiring enrichment capabilities is that the know-how required to

enrich uranium to 3.5 percent, thereby making it suitable for reactor fuel, is identical to the knowledge needed to continue enriching it to 90 percent—that is, to weapons-grade material. Now that Iran has crossed the enrichment threshold, the assumption there seems to be that its program cannot be stopped, and that further negotiations will now have to proceed based on an acceptance of its right to produce nuclear fuel.

What was left unspoken. Between 2003 and 2005, Rohani repeatedly emphasized to Western media that Iran's program was intended exclusively for peaceful purposes. He also often stressed to the West that Iran had agreed to suspend its centrifuge assembly and enrichment activities only on a temporary basis. Rohani always emphasized that should negotiations reach a dead end or fail to adequately guarantee Iran's right to fuel cycle technology, the enrichment suspension would end.³⁶ These two messages, so often communicated to the West, were omitted from Rohani's speech. The reason for these omissions could be closely related to the objective of Rohani's speech, which was to defend to Iranian policy makers the regime's strategy of negotiating with the Europeans in order to simultaneously achieve the political goal of delaying referral to the Security Council as long as possible, and the technical goal of mastering the fuel cycle. Rohani preferred, therefore, to emphasize to this audience the calculated benefits of negotiating, and to assure them that these negotiations were not slowing the progress of Iran's nuclear program.

What the speech reveals. Several aspects of the speech are surprising. The first is Rohani's acknowledgment that if Iran had avoided clandestine activities to begin with and had publicly acknowledged its research activities, the crisis with the international community could have been averted. Rohani must have been aware, however, that while such a strategy would have mitigated international criticism of Iran's concealment activities, it would also have provided a clear indication of Iran's chosen technology, acquisitions, and experiments—which were difficult to justify on economic or energy grounds but did have applications in the weapons realm.

A second surprising assessment revealed in the speech was Iran's firm belief that its case would be referred to the Security Council eventually no matter what policy it chose. Iran's conviction that it could not escape such a referral may have resulted from its deep mistrust of IAEA objectivity, partially on account of U.S. influence over IAEA findings and recommendations.³⁷ But Iran may also have planned all along to produce nuclear weapons and concluded that since it was not about to tame this ambition, the matter would inevitably be turned over at some point to the Security Council.

A third interesting aspect of the speech is the regime's apparent sensitivity to Iranian public opinion—which reflects the Iranian government's concern about its legitimacy and its base of support and may have important policy implications. As indicated by Rohani, the Iranian public is very interested in the country's nuclear program and is very sensitive to its potential political and economic costs. The regime currently seems to be playing both sides of this issue. On the one hand, by saying that a country that can enrich uranium to 3.5 percent also has the capability to enrich it to 90 percent, the regime implicitly suggests that mastering fuel cycle technology will provide Iran with the advantages it needs should it decide to produce nuclear weapons. At the same time, this declaratory policy allows the regime to continue to claim that the program is strictly for peaceful purposes.

This strategy could test the will of the Iranian people. Iran's legitimate long-term need for energy, and its right to explore whether nuclear energy might be the answer, is not linked to, nor is it synonymous with, acquiring nuclear fuel cycle capabilities: Iran can acquire nuclear energy without necessarily possessing nuclear fuel cycle capabilities. By renouncing nuclear fuel cycle activities and signing a Security Council-approved agreement to buy reactor fuel from Russia (which has already agreed to supply Iran with fuel for the lifetime of Bushehr), backed by European and IAEA secondary guarantees of fuel supply in case Russia ever fails to honor the agreement, Iran can solve its energy needs at a much lower cost, and without raising serious questions about its intentions.

Epilogue

It is interesting to consider Hassan Rohani's assessment in his speech of Iran's legal, technical, and political standing on the nuclear issue. Looking back with the benefit of hindsight, we can see that his assessment of Iran's technical standing was accurate. His assessments of Iran's legal and political standing, however, were somewhat optimistic. On the one hand, he indicated that Iran assumed that its nuclear situation was bound to eventually be referred to the United Nations Security Council. On the other hand, he seems to have been optimistic regarding the likelihood that Iran could delay such a referral. He believed that Iran had made good progress on the legal front and argued that almost all of the differences between Iran and the IAEA had been resolved; even with respect to the few issues that remained unresolved, Rohani opined that "we have gotten closer to a final solution."³⁸ At the time the speech was given, Rohani apparently hoped that Iran would be able to solve most of the problems surrounding its nuclear policy within the IAEA framework.

Technologically, Rohani's assessment that Iran had made significant progress in advancing its nuclear capabilities was accurate: Iran had indeed solved a number of the major obstacles it had previously faced. The Isfahan Uranium Conversion facility had become operational; centrifuge parts were being built and assembled; and, according to its own statements, Iran is successfully enriching uranium to 3.5 percent and is exploring the use of P-2 centrifuges. These technical developments, we should note, serve Iran's interests in several respects: They enhance its international prestige, afford greater leverage in any future negotiations, and may possibly deter military action against Iran.

Rohani suggested that Iran use the technical progress Iran had achieved by the time the speech was delivered to create a nuclear fait accompli. He recommended accelerating Iran's efforts on the technical front: "If one day we are able to complete the fuel cycle and the world sees that it has no choice, that we do possess the technology, then the situation will be different."³⁹

Rohani also advises his audience, however, that this objective should be pursued while keeping the avenue for negotiation open, so as to allow Iran to improve its technical capabilities while postponing referral to the Security Council for as long as possible. Warning that Iran should avoid what in fact was to occur after Iran ended its suspension of enrichment activities, Rohani cautioned, "I think we should not be in a great rush to deal with this issue. We should be patient and find the most suitable time to do away with the suspension. . . . we must move very carefully, in a very calculated manner."⁴⁰

Clearly, Rohani's recommendation to avoid confrontation was not adopted by President Mahmud Ahmadinejad and the new negotiating team. In January 2006, Iran announced the end of its suspension of uranium enrichment, and in February it resumed actual enrichment activities. As a result, the IAEA Board of Governors referred Iran's case to the Security Council.⁴¹ Not surprisingly, in the April 19 speech referred to at the beginning of this Brief, Rohani expressed dismay at the policy choices that had resulted in this development. "The art (of diplomacy) is to become self-sufficient at minimal costs. Pursuing some policies without considering the consequences is no big deal."⁴²

(Endnotes)

- 1) Text of speech by Supreme National Security Council Secretary Hassan Rohani to the Supreme Cultural Revolution Council, "Beyond the Challenges Facing Iran and the IAEA Concerning the Nuclear Dossier," *Rahbord (in Persian)*, 30 September 2005 place and date not given, 7-38. FBIS-IAP20060113336001.
- 2) The National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), the group that revealed the existence of the sites, was founded in July 1981 in Tehran, in opposition to Ayatollah Khomeini's regime. Later the Council moved its headquarters to Paris. The group is included under the United States State Department's list of groups that support terrorism (under its alias, Mujahedin-e Khalq). See United State Department of State, Designation of National Council of Resistance and National Council of Resistance of Iran under Executive Order 13224 (Washington, DC, August 15, 2003).
- 3) Although the exact date of the speech was not specified, from the dates mentioned throughout the speech it can be concluded that it was delivered during Ramadan 2004 (October 15– November 14, 2004).
- 4) Rohani goes on at some length to assure his audience that it was not Iran that disclosed the identity of the middleman and his connection to the Pakistani A. Q. Khan's network.
- 5) Text of speech by Supreme National Security Council Secretary Hassan Rohani to the Supreme Cultural Revolution Council. 4.
- 6) *Ibid.*, 13.
- 7) *Ibid.*, 16–17.
- 8) *Ibid.*, 17.
- 9) *Ibid.*, 1.
- 10) *Ibid.*, 27.
- 11) *Ibid.*, 31–32.
- 12) *Ibid.*, 19.
- 13) *Ibid.*, 18.
- 14) *Ibid.*, 19.
- 15) *Ibid.*, 38.
- 16) *Ibid.*, 20.
- 17) Text of speech by Supreme National Security Council Secretary Hassan Rohani to the Supreme Cultural Revolution Council. 19, 29.
- 18) *Ibid.* 20.
- 19) *Ibid.*, 23.
- 20) *Ibid.*
- 21) *Ibid.*, 33.
- 22) Iran denied that it conducted any enrichment tests, insisting that the contamination found by the IAEA was a result of experiments done by the original sellers (Russia and Pakistan) of the centrifuges. According to the IAEA's February 2006 report, it seems that most of the highly enriched uranium contamination originated in Russia. But

the IAEA was unable to conclusively establish the possible other sources of highly and low enriched uranium contamination. To do so, the IAEA would need to have additional access to and information on the scope and chronology of Iran's P-1 and P-2 centrifuges programs. See Report by the IAEA Director General, *Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in the Islamic Republic of Iran* (Vienna, 27 February 2006), GOV/2006/15. Available at <http://www.iaea.org/Publications/Documents/Board/2006/gov2006-15.pdf>, paragraphs 48–49.

23) Text of speech by Supreme National Security Council Secretary Hassan Rohani to the Supreme Cultural Revolution Council., 7.

24) *Ibid.*, 16.

25) *Ibid.*, 10.

26) *Ibid.*, 12. On April 13, 2006, President Ahmadinejad announced that Iran was exploring the use of P-2 centrifuges. This statement came as a clear contradiction to Iran's consistent claim that it had abandoned work on this advanced technology three years ago.

27) *Ibid.*, 26.

28) *Ibid.*, 4.

29) *Ibid.*

30) *Ibid.*, 24.

31) *Ibid.*, 35.

32) *Ibid.*

33) *Ibid.*, 36.

34) According to the IAEA's April 28, 2006 report to the Security Council Iran has produced since September 2005, 110 tons of UF₆. If enriched to 90 percent, this amount could produce sufficient material for ten nuclear weapons. See Report by the IAEA Director General, *Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in the Islamic Republic of Iran* (Vienna, 28 April 2006), GOV/2006/27, paragraph 32.

35) "Iran can be a 'superpower', Ahmadinejad says," *Agence France Presse (English)* April 28, 2006.

36) Hassan Rohani, "Peaceful Nuclear Activity and Our Constructive Interaction with the World," *National Interest* 1, no. 1 (Winter 2005): 5-21; see esp. 7, 13, and 18.

37) It is interesting to note that the U.S. failed several times in the last couple of years to influence IAEA policy and management. To mention but two instances: 1) Rejecting U.S. claims, the IAEA issued reports to the Security Council in the period preceding the Iraq War attesting that Iraq did not possess nuclear weapons program; and 2) over U.S. objections, Mohamed ElBaradei was reappointed Director General.

38) Text of speech by Supreme National Security Council Secretary Hassan Rohani to the Supreme Cultural Revolution Council., 16.

39) *Ibid.*, 31.

40) *Ibid.*, 33.

41) On March 29, 2006, the Security Council adopted by consensus a Presidential Statement expressing serious concern that after years of investigation into Iran's nuclear program, the IAEA had not received suitable assurances that Iran was not secretly developing nuclear weapons. It called upon Iran to comply with the IAEA's demand to halt all uranium enrichment and to seek to "build confidence" that Iran's nuclear activities were for an "exclusively peaceful purpose." IAEA Director General Mohamed ElBaradei was asked to report to the Security Council within 30 days (i. e., by April 28, 2006) on "the process of Iran's compliance." U.N. Security Council, *Presidential Statement Underlines Importance of Iran's Re-Establishing Full, Sustained Suspension of Uranium Enrichment*, S/PRST/2006/15, March 29, 2006.

42) "Former nuclear chief criticizes Ahmadinejad's nuclear policies," *Deutsche Presse-Agentur*, April 20, 2006.



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