



Committee on International Justice and Peace

3211 FOURTH STREET NE • WASHINGTON DC 20017-1194 • 202-541-3160
WEBSITE: WWW.USCCB.ORG/JPHD • FAX 202-541-3339

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Chairs and Ranking Members
Senate Committees on Foreign Relations
and on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
U. S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Chair and Ranking Member
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairs and Ranking Members:

As Chair of the Committee on International Justice and Peace of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, I write to reiterate our support for the United States and its P5 + 1 partners in their ongoing dialogue with Iran over its nuclear program. Our Committee urges Congress not to take any actions that could undermine the negotiation process or make a responsible multi-party agreement more difficult to achieve. Given the long history of acrimonious and tense relations, it is vital to continue to foster an environment in which all parties can build mutual confidence and trust in order to work towards a final accord that enhances genuine peace.

We welcome the recent steps the United States has taken to engage with Iran to address the crucial questions related to their nuclear program. We encourage our nation to continue down this path. Now is the time for dialogue and building bridges which foster peace and greater understanding.

Yesterday, Pope Francis again expressed his “hope that a definitive agreement may soon be reached between Iran and the 5+1 Group regarding the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes” and his “appreciation of the efforts already made in this regard.” In a September 2013 statement to the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Vatican said, “...[T]he present difficulties can and must be overcome through diplomatic channels, making use of all the means that diplomacy has at its disposal, and considers it necessary to overcome the various obstacles which objectively impede mutual trust.”

As negotiations reach a critical stage, we advocate both patience and avoidance of any measures that might jeopardize the prospects for a diplomatic solution that can advance peace in the region.

Sincerely yours,

Most Reverend Oscar Cantú
Bishop of Las Cruces
Chairman, Committee on International Justice and Peace
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops