



Committee on International Justice and Peace

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Chairs and Ranking Members
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
Senate Committee 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 voice my support for the United States and its P5 + 1 partners in the ongoing dialogue with Iran over its nuclear program. Our Committee urges Congress not to take any actions that could undermine the negotiation process. 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. In his remarks to the International Atomic Energy Agency in September 2013, Archbishop Dominique Mamberti, Secretary for the Holy See's Relations with States, reflected the spirit of Pope Francis when he said: "As for the most recent developments in negotiations on Iran's nuclear programme, my Delegation would like to reiterate that the Holy See is firmly convinced that the 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."

A peaceful resolution will no doubt require sustained negotiations over a period of time. We advocate patience and avoidance of any measures that might jeopardize the prospects for a diplomatic solution that can advance peace in the region.

Sincerely yours,

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Most Reverend Richard E. Pates

Bishop of Des Moines

Chair, Committee on International Justice and Peace