

As you may have heard in the news, there have been major developments regarding Iran's nuclear program in recent days. Last week, leaders from the United States, Great Britain, and France publicly charged Iran with concealing a uranium enrichment facility in a mountain near the city of Qum. According to reports, western intelligence agencies were aware of, and had been monitoring, the nuclear site for a few years. The deeply troubling disclosure is further evidence that Iran is on a rapid path to building a nuclear weapon and is led by a fanatical and deceiving regime. Even more disturbing, the New York Times reported that "Many diplomats and analysts believe that the Qum facility is only one of a series of hidden installations that Iran has constructed alongside its public ones for what is considered to be a military program." I am particularly concerned about this development given President Obama's [recent decision](#) to abandon missile defense systems in Europe.

Western intelligence agencies are not certain about when Iran could produce a nuclear weapon and develop the advanced missile technology needed to deliver it though the leading nuclear watchdog group has stated that they are now capable of producing one. The discovery of the Qum facility should lead our nation and the international community to address this looming crisis with renewed urgency, immediately enforce crippling sanctions on Iran, and make it clear that a nuclear Iran is unacceptable because it would severely threaten our national security and regional stability. I will support upcoming legislation to strengthen U.S. sanctions against Iran, but most experts believe forceful multilateral sanctions will be necessary to really get the regime's attention. Unfortunately, Russia and China, two key members of the United Nations, have thus far defeated efforts to impose meaningful sanctions.

Meanwhile, the United States participated in talks with six nations plus Iran yesterday. President Obama subsequently indicated that these initial talks will be followed by further negotiations later this month. Yesterday's meeting also brought forth a promise by Iran to allow international inspectors to visit the previously concealed nuclear facility. While this is a welcome development, we should also demand that Iran immediately suspend all uranium enrichment and disclose all of its nuclear activities. Above all, the United States must not accept a cycle of behavior where Iran appears cede to international demands, but in fact continues to move forward with their nuclear activities. Because I am extremely doubtful that negotiations will lead to Iran abandoning its current course, I believe we must leave all options on the table.