

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 15, 2016

The Honorable President Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama,

We write to express our continued concern regarding Iran's tests of the Emad and Ghadr-110 ballistic missiles on October 10 and November 21 of 2015, respectively. We are concerned that Iran's belligerent actions have thus far gone unpunished. As members of this body have warned before, a failure to enforce the rules is an invitation for further Iranian transgressions.

On December 17, in testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Ambassador Stephen Mull confirmed that both of Iran's ballistic missile tests violated multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions, including Resolution 1929 and continued in Resolution 2231, which followed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). We were encouraged to see a notification on December 30 that your administration was preparing to sanction 11 companies and individuals for their role in helping Iran's missile developers illegally procure key items from foreign suppliers. However, we were troubled to see your administration indefinitely delay these sanctions hours later.

We are concerned that, despite assurances from the State Department, the sanctions delay was a reaction to Iranian President Hassan Rouhani's move to accelerate Iran's missile program as well as Tehran's repeated threats to withdraw from the agreement if any new sanctions are imposed. Yet last year, you and your administration repeatedly assured Congress that our nation would retain the ability to punish Iran for its aggressive and illicit behavior—ranging from support of terrorism to human rights abuses to missile activity—and that this toolkit would include the use of sanctions. In a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on July 23, 2015, Secretary of the Treasury Jack Lew told us, “[w]e have also made clear we reserve the right to put additional sanctions in place to address concerns about terrorism [and] human rights.”

These ballistic missile tests come in the wake of mounting Iranian aggression both domestically and in the region. Since the signing of the JCPOA in July, Iran has fired rockets near U.S. warships; fomented unrest in Yemen; sent weapons to the regime of Bashar al-Assad in violation of the arms embargo; taken another American hostage and refused to release the ones it presently holds; and continued its support for Hamas and Hezbollah terrorists. In practice, it appears that your administration has allowed Iran to dictate the implementation of the nuclear deal by not taking punitive action for any of these transgressions.

To address these concerns, as well as to demonstrate to Iran's leadership the consequences of further illicit behavior, we request that you provide a roadmap of what you consider to be illicit behavior from Iran, and what sanctions or punitive steps will be taken in the event of such behavior. Specifically, we ask you to describe what actions the Treasury Department is ready to take against those individuals and entities involved in the ballistic missile program and those Iranian and foreign banks that are financing it.

If your goal is to ensure Iranian compliance with the JCPOA, it is absolutely crucial that Iran's blatant misbehavior is met with real consequences. As we reportedly near the JCPOA's Implementation Day, it is imperative that Congress and the American people be assured that Iran's transgressions will not continue to go unpunished.

Thank you for your attention to this very serious issue. We look forward to your prompt and detailed response.

Sincerely,

David A. Bonior

Kelly A. Ayotte

Gregory E. Meeks

James M. Van Hollen

Cory Gardner

Dan Coats

Tim Scott

Thom Tillis

Jerry Moran

John Boozman

Bill Cassidy, M.D.

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