

**GREAT DECISIONS DISCUSSION GROUP**  
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**KATONAH VILLAGE LIBRARY**  
**April 16, 2013**  
**10:15 A. M. – 12:15 P. M.**

# **Iran - What Next?**

## **Armageddon or Accommodation?**

Topic Leader: Fred Piker

### **AGENDA**

#### 10:15: Kickoff

- Welcome and Introduction of Guests & New Participants
- Administrative Items
- Topic Leader Presentation
- Group Discussion

***CHAPTER MOTTO - "DISCUSSIONS SHOULD BE CONDUCTED WITHOUT FONDNESS FOR DISPUTE OR DESIRE FOR VICTORY" – BEN FRANKLIN***

### **UPCOMING MEETINGS AND TOPICS**

- April 30, 2013 -- **NATO**  
Topic Leader: Tyler Beebe
- May 14, 2013 -- **China in Africa**  
Topic Leader: Joe Adams

### **TODAY'S TOPIC**

Shortly after militant students stormed the U. S. Embassy in Tehran and took the diplomatic staff as hostages in November, 1979, the U. S. broke diplomatic relations with Iran. Since then the Islamic Republic has:

- Denounced Israel's right to exist and continues to threaten wiping it off the map;
- Not allowed IAEA inspectors to review its nuclear development/production facilities which Iran claims are intended only for "peaceful purposes;"
- Provided aid and other support to terrorist organizations and more recently to the Syrian government;
- Continued human rights abuses within the Republic, including interfering with and suppressing voting rights;
- Courted a number of potential U. S. adversaries, included Venezuela, China, and Russia; and
- Met with the U. S. and the West in a few exploratory discussions but to no avail.

The net result has been stalemate and increasing concern for miscalculation by either Iran or the U.S., Israel and the West. In response, the U.N., E.U., and U.S. have imposed sanctions and an oil embargo on Iran. These have led to high unemployment, inflation, civil unrest, and revenue shortfall within Iran. Additionally, without any progress on curtailing Iran's nuclear development, both Israel and the U. S. have indicated Iran must not cross a "red line." With no breakthrough in sight, both sides continue to ponder "what next?"

On April 16<sup>th</sup> we will explore the underlying causes of the continuing confrontation and consider possible next steps for Iran, the U. S., and the West. Prior to discussion, the Topic Introduction will include: Iranian History Highlights; Relevance of Islam, Shias, and Sunnis; Iran Country Profile; Differing Perspectives – Iran vs. U. S. and the West; and Options – both for Iran and the U. S. and the West.

In preparation, prior to April 16<sup>th</sup> please read Chapter 6 in the 2013 FPA Briefing Book, "Iran and the U. S.: three decades of futility"; and consider the following questions:

1. Since Pakistan and North Korea already have nuclear capability, why can't Iran?
2. How likely will sanctions and the oil embargo force Iran to serious negotiations?
3. What is the downside of prolonged stalemate and inability to reach accommodation?
4. What are the principal issues to be resolved?
5. How would a nuclear Iran affect U. S. foreign policy?
6. What are the minimum requirements for accommodation – for Iran AND the U. S. and the West?
7. How would accommodation impact Iran, its neighboring countries and also the region, the U. S., and Israel?
8. Assuming resolution is possible, which option is most likely to succeed?

## **SUGGESTED READINGS**

- **Iran and the U.S.: three decades of futility**, by John W. Limbert, Chapter 6 of the FPA 2013 Briefing Book. (Two copies are available at the Katonah Library Reference Desk for use in the library.)