

Editorial

The IAEA Resolution Against Iran – A Mockery of Justice

Any impartial observer of the Iran nuclear issue would have to conclude that it is irrational and illogical that countries which possess the largest arsenal of weapons of mass destruction, that are the biggest manufacturers and sellers of these weapons, and which are actually guilty of using these weapons countless times, guilty of violating international law countless times, and guilty of committing aggression, should be allowed to sit in judgement of other countries on issues of international peace and security.

Yet this is what happened at the special meeting of the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on February 4, and this is what happens every day in the meetings of the UN Security Council. This arrangement of the world needs changing by the combined efforts of the

working class and enlightened people of all countries if we are to have international peace and security based on justice and equality for all nations and peoples.

The IAEA resolution put together by the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Russia and China speculates on the ambitions and intentions of Iran. When Iran states that its nuclear research is for peaceful applications only, this is not good enough for these big powers. In fact, nothing that Iran says or does will ever satisfy these big powers short of Iran giving up their national rights.

This is really the issue: the right of countries to pursue their own economic, political and social development, independent of the wishes of the imperialist powers. The nuclear issue raised by the

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Defence of Canadian Sovereignty or Support for the U.S. War on Terror?

Much has been made in the media of comments by the U.S. ambassador to Canada on Canada's claim to the Arctic and the response of Prime Minister Stephen Harper. On January 25, Ambassador Wilkins, speaking at a forum at the University of Western Ontario, said that his government opposed the part of the Conservative campaign platform about deploying military icebreakers to the Arctic to assert Canadian sovereignty. He described the proposal as an attempt to "create a problem that doesn't exist."

Harper was quick to respond, telling reporters that his government gets its mandate from Canadians, not the U.S. ambassador.

Commentators later described this response as an attempt to refute suggestions that the Bush administration welcomed the Conservatives' win and to try and prove he is not in the Americans' pocket.

Disputes over Canadian sovereignty in Arctic waters, particularly the waters of the Northwest Passage, are not new. There have been a number of incidents since the passage was first navigated by ship 70 years ago. The issue has now become pressing once again as the shrinking polar ice cap has led many to speculate that within a few decades the Northwest Passage could become one of the most important shipping routes between Asia and Europe. This route

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Special Meeting of IAEA Board of Governors Passes Resolution Against Iran

The special meeting of the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), held in Vienna between February 2 and 4, 2006 approved a resolution to immediately report its decisions to the U.N. Security Council on what confidence-building measures it requires from Iran. The resolution alleged that Iran has violated its obligations under the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and expressed an absence of confidence that Iran's nuclear program is exclusively for peaceful purposes. The resolution also directs the IAEA to report to the Security Council on Iran's implementation of these measures after the regular meeting of its board on March 6.

The resolution was approved by a vote of 27 in favour, 3 against, and 5 abstentions. The votes in favour of the resolution came from Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Britain, Canada, China, Colombia, Ecuador, Egypt, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, India, Japan, Republic of Korea, Norway, Portugal, Russia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sri Lanka, Sweden, United States and Yemen. The votes against the resolution were from Cuba, Venezuela and Syria, and the abstentions came from Algeria, Belarus, Indonesia, Libya and South Africa.

The resolution "deems it necessary for Iran" to implement five "confidence-building measures":

- * Re-establish full and sustained suspension of all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities, including research and development;

- * Reconsider the construction of a research reactor moderated by heavy water;

- * Ratify promptly and implement in full the Additional Protocol;

- * Pending ratification, continue to act in accordance with the provisions of the Additional Protocol; and

- * Implement transparency measures...which extend beyond the formal requirements of the Safeguards Agreement and Additional Protocol, and include such access to individuals, documentation relating to procurement, dual use equipment, certain military-owned workshops and research and development.

On January 18, Britain, France and Germany (EU-3) requested the special meeting of the Board of Governors of the IAEA after Iran removed the seals from its Natanz uranium enrichment plant and resumed its nuclear fuel research. A resolution was drafted by the United States, Britain, France and Germany, and then approved by Russia and China at a meeting of foreign ministers in London on January 31. The resolution was formally submitted to the IAEA by Britain, France and Germany.

The resolution was the result of a compromise among the Big Five powers on the timing of any action by the Security Council. The United States and the EU-3 wanted the U.N. Security Council to take action to reinforce the decisions of the IAEA immediately following the special board meeting. China and Russia, however, would only agree to support the resolution if time was allowed to resolve the issue prior the next meeting of the IAEA board on March 6.

The vote was planned for February 3, but was delayed until February 4. The delay arose from the attempts by some developing countries to revise the resolution and from counter efforts by the EU-3 to reach a compromise in order to avoid abstentions from these countries. The U.S. and EU-3, however, would not budge from the original text. Also, a dispute arose between the U.S. and Egypt over linking Israel and its nuclear weapons to nuclear concerns in the Middle East. The United States did not want any mention of this in the resolution, while Egypt wanted it included to give some balance to the resolution. In the end, the resolution makes no mention of Israel's nuclear weapons.

The Iranian government has stated that the allegations contained in the February 4 resolution of the Board of the Governors of the IAEA and in the preceding January 31 joint statement by the United States, Britain, France, Russia and China are false, violate the provisions of the NPT and the statutes of the IAEA, and are politically motivated.

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U.S. and EU-3 (Britain, France and Germany) is merely a cover for their own ambitions to once again dominate Iran and decide on its destiny. They want to reverse the Iranian revolution of 1979 and once again install a puppet regime to do their bidding.

The big powers are only interested in their empires – in preserving and expanding them. Their method of diversion and provocation is well described in a document from Iran's Permanent Mission to the IAEA, published a few days before the IAEA meeting. It pointed out that: "It is of great concern and disappointment that the more Iran did cooperate and took additional steps, transparency measures, beyond its legal obligations, the more stringent safeguards were applied; the more outstanding questions were resolved, the language of the proposed resolutions by the U.S. and EU-3 became tougher."

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Statement of the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Response to the Statement from the Five Nuclear States - February 1, 2006

Reprinted below is the text of the statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran on February 1, 2006 in response to the decision of the five nuclear states – United States, Britain, France, Russia and China – to recommend referral of Iran to the U.N. Security Council. *Modern Communism* has edited the text in some places to improve the English translation.

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In the course of the past two and a half years, the Islamic Republic of Iran has made the greatest efforts for expanded cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency. Nevertheless, the five nuclear Permanent Members of the Security Council issued a statement which is totally political and contrary to the recognized international rules and regulations.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has fully complied with the provisions of the NPT, has voluntarily implemented the Additional Protocol and accepted inspections, and has taken measures beyond the requirements of the Additional Protocol for the sake of removing misunderstandings, and to demonstrate utmost cooperation, transparency, and confidence building.

While the path to negotiations is still open and there are yet substantial opportunities for finding a rational solution, political motives can make the situation even more difficult and complicated.

It is regrettable that states that lay claim to civilization are using the threat of referral to the Security Council against a nation merely on grounds of “research and development”.

It is also totally amazing that while all nuclear activities of the Islamic Republic of Iran are under the inspection of the Agency on a voluntary basis and the Agency has the possibility for the maximum inspections of our facilities, some governments are trying to bring an end to this arrangement and to the voluntary actions of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

This action presents the government of Iran with a serious legal obstacle since there is a binding resolution, ratified by the Islamic Consultative Assembly, that leaves no choice for the government but to stop its voluntary cooperation.

This statement [by the five nuclear states] has no legal basis and violates the provisions of the NPT and

the statutes of the IAEA.

These actions will bring nothing but loss of credibility for the Agency and the weakening of the standing of the international treaties and bodies. Those behind such actions must accept the consequences.

The commanding and arrogant tone of the statement violates the professional and legal independence of the Agency. It also undermines the rights of the member states of the NPT, the IAEA Board of Governors and even other members of the Security Council, and demonstrates that a closed club of a few members from the powerful countries manage the affairs of our world against the desire and the will of nations, governments and the international community.

It is regrettable that states with the largest arsenals of nuclear weapons, instead of trying to build international confidence through implementing their nuclear disarmament obligation under the NPT, are developing new and more sophisticated types of nuclear weapons and openly threatening to use them against non-nuclear states.

These states intend to hold on to their monopoly of nuclear know-how and technology and deprive other nations of their legal rights to the peaceful use of nuclear technology.

Their conduct has given rise to a wave of mistrust in the international community about their real intentions. They need to act, to take constructive and practical measures to build confidence and trust in the international community.

In our opinion, resolving differences of views and answering the questions about the peaceful nature of Iran’s nuclear activities is only possible in a cooperative atmosphere free from pressure and intimidation, and through dialogue. We can still take the path of building confidence by using constructive approaches and working towards greater understanding.

These threats will not have the slightest impact on the resolve of the people and the government of Iran to pursue and exercise their legitimate rights under the NPT. Involving the Security Council in Iran’s peaceful nuclear program is the beginning of a process which will be taken out of the hands of those who initiated it.

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is 7,000 km shorter than the passage currently used through the Panama Canal.

Canada has long maintained that these waters are internal to Canada, arguing that the Inuit people have inhabited the islands of the Arctic and used the waters for thousands of years. Canada received official support from the Inuit for Canadian sovereignty claims as part of the 1993 Nunavut Land Claims Agreement.

The most recent disagreement between Canadians and Americans over the Northwest Passage came in 1985 when the U.S. sent an icebreaker, the Polar Sea, through the passage without first asking permission from the Canadian government. The Americans claimed that using the passage was simply the most cost effective way to get the ship from Greenland to Alaska and declared that they did not need to get permission to travel in “international waters”.

Following the Polar Sea incident, in 1986 the Canadian government issued a reaffirmation of Canadian rights to the waters, a declaration which the U.S., European Union and Japan have all refused to recognize. They argue that while the Arctic islands belong to Canada, the waters more than 12 miles around the islands are international.

However, comments made by U.S. officials since the September 11, 2001 attacks suggest that the Americans are now willing to recognize Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic if Canada agrees to beef up its military presence in the area as part of a coordinated effort to help out with the “war on terrorism”. Speaking in late 2004, then-U.S. ambassador to Canada Paul Cellucci suggested the Americans could “take another look” at the issue, stating: “We are looking at everything through the terrorism prism. Our top priority is to stop the terrorists. So perhaps when this is brought to the table again, we may have to take another look.”

Similar comments have been made by senior military officials in the U.S. who have urged Canada to increase its patrols in the Arctic by acquiring several new ice-cutting ships – exactly what the Harper government has committed to doing.

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The resolution of the IAEA against Iran is itself illegal. There is nothing in the statutes of Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the IAEA that makes it obligatory for Iran to implement any of the measures outlined in the resolution. Every country has a right under the NPT and IAEA to pursue nuclear research and development, to build research reactors, to accept or reject short-notice inspections of its facilities and to voluntarily accept or reject the Additional Protocol.

The resolution puts the IAEA into further disrepute and further undermines its credibility as an organization dedicated to international peace and security. The IAEA is a creature created by the nuclear powers to defend their monopoly of nuclear weapons through which they seek to maintain their domination of the world. In order to have any credibility as an organization dedicated to international peace and security, the statutes of the IAEA also state that it is committed to the disarmament of the nuclear powers.

Instead of disarmament of the nuclear powers and a regime of non-proliferation among the non-nuclear powers, the statutes of the IAEA are applied selectively. The existing nuclear powers are permitted to perfect and expand their nuclear weapons and to sell these weapons and technology to their allies such as Israel, India, Pakistan and the Republic of Korea. Another set of rules is applied when it comes to Iran which the IAEA resolution even calls a “special case”.

We call upon all progressive, democratic and enlightened people to condemn the IAEA resolution for what it is – a mockery of justice!

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