

Opening Statement of U.S. Senator Jack Reed
Ranking Member, Senate Armed Services Committee
(As prepared for delivery)

SD-G50
Dirksen Senate Office Building
Wednesday, August 5, 2015

Hearing on the Defense Implications of
the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)

Good Morning. Over the past two weeks, the Chairman has assembled a series of hearings on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or JCPOA. Last week, the President's representatives – four cabinet secretaries and the country's most senior military officer – made the case for the agreement, both on the terms of the deal itself and the way forward with our friends and allies in the Middle East. Yesterday, the committee heard from a number of former senior government officials with experience in the diplomatic, intelligence, and military communities. Today, the committee will hear from additional witnesses who bring with them a vast array of experience on the region, non-proliferation issues, and sanctions implementation policy.

I want to thank the Chairman for assembling this series of hearings for the committee. They have provided a superb venue for understanding the dynamics that shaped the P5+1 negotiations and for assessing the impacts of the agreement on Iran's calculations with respect to its nuclear program and regional ambitions.

I want to pose the same questions to this panel that I asked yesterday. First and foremost, I hope you will provide an assessment of whether the deal is the best available option to prevent the Iranians from obtaining a nuclear weapon. I also specifically hope each of you will address:

- (1) The terms of the agreement itself, particularly with respect to cutting-off the paths to a nuclear device, the sufficiency of the duration of the elements of the agreement,

- and the breakout time necessary for Iran to acquire a nuclear weapon;
- (2) The alternatives, if any, to the JCPOA;
 - (3) The inspections regime under the deal, including any lessons-learned from past international inspections regimes that have been incorporated into this deal;
 - (4) The role and capacity of the International Atomic Energy Agency to implement this deal; and
 - (5) The sanctions regime under the JCPOA and availability of similar tools the United States will have at its disposal for targeting Iran as a result of support for terrorism, regional destabilizing activities and human rights abuses.

Aside from the JCPOA, I would also appreciate our witnesses providing their assessment of two other crucial areas. First, while the P5+1 negotiated this agreement, none of us share a border with Iran. Our partners in the Gulf Cooperation Council, or GCC, all share land or maritime borders with Iran. This makes Iran's activities in the region a far more tangible problem. The Camp David summit earlier this year continued our engagement with our GCC partners on this issue and Secretary Kerry is in the region this week working on the next steps of our efforts to enhance the GCC's ballistic missile defense capability and to improve their interoperability and collective defense against asymmetric threats. I hope our witnesses will provide their assessment of this endeavor.

Second, Israel rightly views Iran as a significant and ongoing threat to their national security interests. I would be interested in hearing the assessment of the witnesses on how the United States might move forward with Israel under this agreement to protect our shared national security interests.

I look forward to the panel's responses as we continue to deepen our understanding this agreement.

Thank you.