

CSIS-TCU Schieffer Series  
The Iranian Nuclear Deal:  
A New Direction for Tehran and the West?  
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**Andrew Schwartz:** Welcome to the new Center for Strategic and International Studies. This is the house that John Hamre built, and I'm privileged to work for John Hamre and thank him as much as possible for putting us in this new building. We are truly, truly fortunate to be here. Some of my other bosses are on the way, one of them being Sam Nunn, our chairman, so I wanted to acknowledge him and Sue Cobb, one of our trustees. General Scowcroft and Fred Khosravi I believe are also on their way. Thank you all for coming out on a Washington weather night. It will be well worth it because this is a truly remarkable panel that we have.

I'd like to start by giving a few congratulations to Bob Schieffer. One, you see on this banner the TCU Schieffer School of Journalism. Well, it's been renamed. It's now the TCU Schieffer College of Communication. So congratulations, Bob. [APPLAUSE] That's a real milestone. The second bit of news about Bob Schieffer is Bob, some of you may know, hosts a little show called *Face the Nation*. Last November, in November Sweeps, which is the big marker for all network television, *Face the Nation* averaged 3.58 million viewers which was the show's best sweep in over 25 years. It was first in every household in the United States of America. Among viewers and adults aged 25 to 54, *Face the Nation* is the number one Sunday public affairs show. Congratulations. [APPLAUSE]

While everybody continues to roam, there are plenty of seats. If there aren't seats, you can stand in the back. We can also have a little bit of concourse seating. But I'd also really like to thank our benefactor, the Stavros Niarchos Foundation, and Vasili Tsamis who is here. Vasili, could you stand up? I'm not sure where you are. Vasili, I want to thank you so much for being here. The Stavros Niarchos Foundation is a truly significant partner for CSIS in both the intellectual sense and in a sense of support. We thank them for everything they're doing for us. We just are so glad that you could make it down also from New York in this terrible weather. With that, I'd like to hand it over to Bob Schieffer.

**Bob Schieffer:** Thank you very much, Andrew. Thank you all so much. I must say I am really -- and this is because of the panelists we have here today. This crowd is unbelievable. I mean, don't you guys agree? I thought we'd have a few homeless people looking for a place to get warm who'll wander in. But to have this is one of the largest turnouts that we've had for one of these, and we really have some experts who dropped here today. Dr. Brzezinski of course everybody knows, counselor and trustee here at CSIS, Jimmy Carter's national security adviser, senior research professor at SAIS at Johns Hopkins. So we certainly are glad to have him. Robert Einhorn, assistant secretary for Proliferation during the Carter administration. Right, Bob?

**Robert Einhorn:** I was, but that was in the Clinton administration.

**Bob Schieffer:** That was in the Clinton administration. Then you were also an arms control adviser to President Obama.

**Robert Einhorn:** To Secretary Clinton.

**Bob Schieffer:** And Secretary Clinton. We're glad to have you. You're now at the Brookings, of course. Tom Friedman who has won more Pulitzers than any living person, I think, right now. I don't know anybody who has won more. He has won three of them. And probably one of the most influential people on foreign affairs in America today from his place where he sits and writes on the op-ed page of the *New York Times*. He's also our old friend.

Mr. Einhorn, why don't you just start us off by telling us what is this deal? What are we talking about here? What does it encompass? What do both sides hope to get at?

**Robert Einhorn:** I wouldn't call it a deal, a complete deal. I call it a preparatory deal, a preliminary deal. It was designed by the U.S. and its partners really to stop the clock, to stop the clock on Iran's nuclear program. The program could advance substantially in coming months. This deal very comprehensively and for six months puts a cap on that program. All of the issues you've read about - this Iraq plutonium reactor, the Fordow enrichment facility, the advanced centrifuges - all those things had been capped. So while they're negotiating over the next six months for a comprehensive deal, there'll be no advancement in the program. That's very, very important.

Also, there are some innovative verification procedures so we can be very confident that Iran is not, in fact, advancing its program. The inspectors for the International Atomic Energy Agency will be able to visit key facilities every day. It's usually once every week or two weeks. They'll be going to some facilities they hadn't had access to before, [indiscernible] workshops where the Iranians to produce centrifuges. Uranium mines, it's important to get a handle on uranium ore and yellowcake from the beginning so it's very well verified.

In exchange for that, of course, there's some sanctions-easing measures. That's the principal reason Iran is interested in negotiations, to get relief from the sanctions that are having a crippling effect on their economy. By estimates of the administration, the sanctions-easing steps would be worth at most about \$7 billion for the six-month period. But that compares to roughly \$30 billion during the six-month period that they lose in oil revenues compared to the six-month period before the oil sanctions were imposed. I've seen estimates of the total sanctions bill for Iran. It's about \$100 billion a year. So up to seven billion is very small so I think they're getting a freeze on Iran's program for very little.

They're also getting a slight rollback. If you remember Prime Minister Netanyahu, his cartoon character – you know, a cartoon bomb at the UN - he talked about the accumulation of enriched uranium, enriched to 20 percent level which gets you near to weapons-grade. He said that once it gets to 250 kilograms, that's his red line. Well, this deal rolls it back to zero in that category because the most worrisome form of 20 percent enriched is either put into a powdered form or diluted to below 5.0 percent. So it does a lot.

But all of this is preparatory to a final deal. There are some general principles agreed to in the document from November 24th, and they talk about a long-term agreement. They couldn't reach agreement in exactly how long that would be. They talk about a mutually defined uranium enrichment program that would only be agreed if there's also agreement on specific limits and monitoring measures to make sure that Iran doesn't have the capability to break out of constraints suddenly and quickly get enough highly-enriched uranium for bombs.

But key issues were really put off. The disposition of this plutonium production reactor, they couldn't agree on that. They put it off to the final deal. The disposition of this underground uranium enrichment facility, off into the future. So the next six months will be very hard negotiations. The president, just the other day, said he gave it about a 50/50 possibility of actually reaching a final deal. But I think it's a very promising first step.

**Bob Schieffer:** So I would just ask you too. Is this a good deal or a bad deal? Where are we here? What do you think of it, Dr. Brzezinski?

**Zbigniew Brzezinski:** I think it's a good deal considering the context in which it was being pursued and considering the legacies of the last X number of years in which the relationship became increasingly antagonistic dominated by suspicions, some very justified, and in which the alternative, of course, in the absence of the deal, probably would have been some sort of a miniature collision, a miniature collision which in a short sort of sense we would probably initially win but which would probably plunge us into a much more prolonged, much wider regional conflict. So yes, I think this is a good beginning. But as we are just told, it has a long way to go and the difficult parts are still ahead.

**Bob Schieffer:** What about it, Tom?

**Thomas Friedman:** Yeah, I support this. I think it was a good deal. It was well-negotiated. Under the circumstances, I think the thing to keep in mind is that it really shaped [indiscernible]. I think these sanctions [indiscernible] apex. That is we've probably enlisted as many people as we are going to enlist in the age of Ahmadinejad. Let's remember Iran was led for this last recent decade, I guess, by a president who is so obnoxious, so foul, a holocaust-denying really bad guy. He was the gift that kept on giving because it was very easy or relatively easy to maintain an international sanctions regime with Iran headed by this kind of person. He's gone. He's replaced by someone much more sophisticated, a foreign minister much more adept to dealing with the West and the world.

And I think, also, we have to see this in the context of the last Iranian election, which is the precursor to all of this negotiation. So Iran just had a presidential election in which the supreme leader and his guides allowed six men to run. And their names were Mr. Black, Mr. Black, Mr. Black, Mr. Black, Mr. Black and Mr. Light Black. Lo and behold, 51 percent of Iranians decide they all are going to go for Mr. Light Black. I'm actually told the true number was 64 percent. But the supreme leader was so freaked out by so many people going for the guy who just was a little more moderate than everybody else and really wanted to try opening with the West. So I think the external conditions and the internal conditions in Iran right now were the ideal moment to test. That's all this is, is a legitimate test whether Iran can be a partner for a secure deal that allows them to enrich at the level of their electrical needs and nothing more.

**Bob Schieffer:** I was very interested that I read in I think it was in the *Atlantic*, that Rouhani has more cabinet members with PhDs from American universities. He has more of those in his cabinet than President Obama.

**Thomas Friedman:** His chief-of-staff was formerly the head of the Chamber of Commerce and Iran's chief trade negotiator. It kind of tells you -- also American-educated PhD.

**Bob Schieffer:** But does that really make a difference, Dr. Brzezinski? Is Rouhani a different kind of leader? Tom is talking about Black, Black, Black, Black and Light Black.

**Zbigniew Brzezinski:** I think that sort of defines it, but I think perhaps even more than that. I mean, he was part of the revolution. He was part of that elite that ushered in an era of intense hostility with the United States, but he appears to be also a person who has evolved with time and who has begun to think in a somewhat different fashion. I think that is where they have exploitation. Moreover, and I think that's maybe even more important, Iran is changing. Iran, I think, was swept up by revolutionary passion which to some extent was derived from a rather historical and legitimate resentment of foreign domination, foreign exploitation, perhaps even extreme interference in Iranian internal affairs that united the Iranians in a kind of nationalistic passion and self-assertion.

But then 20, 30 years followed of increasing misery, frustration, fundamentalist extremism and a significant part of the Iranian population increasingly began to view this as a kind of reactionary, counterproductive, self-destructive regime that needs to be altered, preferably peacefully. These elections are in a sense a signal that there is in Iran a population, now perhaps a majority even certainly in the urban areas, that wants to be more like, for example, Turkey. I know Iran a little bit, and I know Turkey a little more, but my sense is that Iran has a stronger chance of being a democratic country as Iran (sic) has service, education, history, orientation and so forth.

**Bob Schieffer:** So who then is driving this in Iran? Is it a general? Are the generals doing it or is it these more enlightened people that are more familiar with the West? Is it the theocrats? Is it the bureaucrats? Who is the driving force there do you think?

**Robert Einhorn:** I'll tell you what is the driving force. The driving force is the sanctions. I think that is the incentive that's why Iran has come to the negotiating table. I think that's why the majority, whether 51 or 64 percent, of Iranian people voted for Rouhani because it's some way to get out from under the sanctions. There's also people like the Foreign Minister Javad Zarif who really felt that their country has become a pariah. They didn't want to be isolated. They wanted to be a part of the international community.

You saw pictures of the Tehran airport when the negotiating team came back from Geneva. There are these young faces, jubilant faces. What were they so happy about? It wasn't because they may have gotten a right to enrich. They didn't know what was in the nuclear deal. They were happy because they saw pictures of the American Secretary of State and their Foreign Minister shaking hands and smiling at one another. I think there's a large community especially of young people who had enough of this isolation and want to be part of the world again.

**Bob Schieffer:** Then why is Israel so much against this, or are they? I mean, we know what Netanyahu is saying. Tom?

**Thomas Friedman:** That's a very good question. Next question over here.  
[LAUGHTER] Look, even paranoids have enemies as Dr. Kissinger said. The fact is under

Ahmadinejad you did have a regime that they'll always say, well, that wasn't exactly the right translation of we want to wipe you off the map. But we had a regime and a leader who made extremely hostile aggressive statements about Israel. As I said, he was Holocaust denier building a nuclear weapon. I think any Israeli leader, and that includes even Ehud Olmert who is not Netanyahu, believe that it was prudent for Israel to take steps to try to engineer global sanctions and even, if necessary, threaten war to ensure that Iran did not get a nuclear weapon. I don't think that that's wrong or it was crazy at all. I have been critical of the fact that it can't also be an excuse for not working on the Israeli-Palestinian front, and I think there are people who suspect that to some degree it is. Nevertheless, it's a legitimate threat.

But what you have in Israel is a lot of diversity of opinion about what Israel should do about it. We know the former intelligence chiefs and many former generals have come out against any military option and really believe that now is the time to cash in on the sanctions.

Israel's view was that we cashed in our sanctions too early. We should have doubled down on the sanctions to the point where Iran would have basically evacuated this whole program. There are no experts I know of on Iran, in this country at least -- well, I'm not going to say no. But I think the majority of experts, the people that Bob works with, don't believe that. I mean, we've been doubling down on sanctions and Iran has just kept building its program. There is every reason to believe having sacrificed this much, they would have gone all the way or one screwdriver away.

So I think that the challenge for Israel will be to not allow just what Iran was trying to prevent, which is to be isolated, to be split off from the global consensus and be split off from the United States. I noticed that Netanyahu has quieted down a lot in the last couple of weeks because I think one thing he saw was after really sending two ministers here and really trying to generate a lot of opposition with Israel's allies up on the Hill that at the end of the day the Congress really sided with the President on this one for the most part.

I think there is a value of having a pistol on the table when negotiating with Iran. You always want it leveraged on your side, and you shouldn't take anything off the table. But I think we should let this play out now, and I think that's in Israel's best interest.

**Robert Einhorn:** You're going to ask the question if we have so much leverage now, why don't we put it to use? Why don't we give it a try? Maybe they won't accept it. Let's give it a try. There's a reason for that. Because until now Iranians have been the intransigent party. We've been the reasonable one. If we ask for an outcome that no one believes is achievable, we will become the intransigent side. We have counted on being the reasonable side in order to get support for the sanctions regime. If we look like we're not interested in a deal, then our partners in this international sanctions coalition, they'll leave the coalition. We need that pressure over the next six months to get Iran to accept an acceptable final deal. I think that's one of the risks of going from maximalist position.

**Bob Schieffer:** Dr. Brzezinski, I noticed that you've tweeted. I didn't know you tweeted, but I see that you have. Clearly you said Obama/Kerry best policy teams since Bush/Jim Baker. Congress is finally becoming embarrassed by Netanyahu's efforts to dictate U.S. policy.

**Zbigniew Brzezinski:** Well, I think there's something to that.

**Bob Schieffer:** Talk about that.

**Zbigniew Brzezinski:** Well, we are all engaged in maneuvers and one can only decipher what might be the modus of particular maneuvers. But I think it's fair to say that Prime Minister Netanyahu expected the agreement not to appear, and I think he was rather surprised that it did. A lot of people in this country were surprised. I think one also has to take note of the fact that this was an agreement not just between the United States and Iran although those were the principal parties, but an agreement which involved also Russia and China and Europe. I think that is a very important step forward in the sense that it creates a kind of a framework on which to build. It commits these countries also to, in a sense, an outcome which is vaguely being previewed without being overly specific.

I think we all have a common interest in Iran not deteriorating into a total social failure, a fundamentalist extremist, and a source of violence. I think that is shared by many Israelis and this is why Israeli's public opinion, as far as I can sense - but Tom knows it much better - is not all that infused with Netanyahu's tactics or assertions.

**Thomas Friedman:** I'd just point out that a day after the agreement was signed, the Tel Aviv stock market went up.

**Robert Einhorn:** That's rather telling.

**Bob Schieffer:** As you all know, there is talk in the Senate to go ahead in passing sanctions bill that would go in effect if there's no progress made within six months. I'd just like to get what each of you thinks the impact of that would be. Would that be a good thing in your view or is it something not so good?

**Robert Einhorn:** I don't think it would be a good thing. I don't think it would be a good thing. The view is if some sanctions are good, more sanctions must be better. I don't think more sanctions are even needed at this point. These sanctions are having a crippling effect. They brought it on to the table. They made significant concessions in this interim deal. They know that if they drag their feet and they don't negotiate seriously over the next six months, that Congress can pass a new sanctions bill immediately at any time. It will take them less than 24 hours to do that. Why does it have to be done now? There's actually a provision in the interim deal that says the U.S. will refrain from imposing additional sanctions.

Now, if it's a kind of delay trigger on the sanctions law and doesn't take effect for six months, maybe that's not inconsistent with the letter of the agreement, but it seems to be inconsistent certainly with the spirit of the agreement. The Iranians have said that if there are new sanctions, that will be a violation of the agreement and hardliners in Iran will take advantage of that and they'll undercut the negotiating authority of the Iranian negotiating team. I think it'll make things very difficult. Well, I think we can always have sanctions. We will have sanctions.

If it's not a deal after six months and the Iranians are not negotiating seriously, there will be more sanctions. We don't just need to do it now.

**Thomas Friedman:** I think President Obama and Secretary Kerry, their reputations are on the line too now. They've struck this deal. They said this is a proper framework for negotiating. If Iran cheats, I think they'll be the first to call for more sanctions. I mean, they

would be extremely embarrassed. They will politically be very vulnerable. Their worst critics would have been proven true. Let's give it a chance. Let's give it a proper, clear, clean lab test.

**Bob Schieffer:** And I'll ask you, Dr. Brzezinski, you do not think holding this out would make it easier to make a deal if this is already on the books?

**Thomas Friedman:** Just remember, the sanctions still exist where the sanctions have been lifted.

**Bob Schieffer:** But I mean this would be more sanctions if you don't go ahead and close the deal.

**Zbigniew Brzezinski:** At some point we have to ask ourselves what is it that we can live with and be reasonably confident that Iran is not in a position to use the nuclear weapon in some fashion that gives it some benefit, unless one becomes a believer that the Iranians are hell-bent on committing suicide. Therefore, the moment they have the first alleged bomb, they'll attack Israel. One has to ask oneself is the assumption behind that that this country is totally suicidal, that the leadership wishes the country to be destroyed is going to attack with the first assumed nuclear weapon a country which has 200 nuclear weapons and has the capacity to deliver them?

I think at some point we'll have to think about that dilemma. I am of the view that at some point probably in the course of these negotiations as they're being finalized, we will have to go more on record - that is to say the United States - that we will, under any circumstance of a threat from Iran directed at Israel, react the same way we would have reacted at any threat by the Soviet Union at Europe, [indiscernible], or the same way as we're still committed to reacting in behalf of the Japanese or the South Koreans if threatened by North Korea. That is to say that that action is tantamount to an attack on the United States.

Now this is a further reinforcement of a situation in which Iran may end up with a nuclear program. In a nuclear program, they always have some potential for breakout. But it provides, I think, a reassurance. In that context, it's also useful to remind ourselves that achieving a nuclear capability is much more complicated than having a theoretical capability for making a weapon.

There's sort of a public assumption which has been fostered to some extent by Netanyahu that the Iranians are just months away from having a weapon. But the point is having a weapon doesn't mean anything.

You have a so-called weapon. First of all, you have to test it. You better make sure it works if you are intent at committing effective suicide, that is to say to take a lot of other people with you. Then, secondly, you have to have a delivery system that is reliable so it has to be tested too. Then, thirdly, presumably as you are totally, totally suicidal, which is hard to assign as a characteristic of a nation of 80 million people that have endured for 3,000 years, you have to have some sense that you want to have a capacity to retaliate if you were struck. Now, all of that will take an enormous amount of time to achieve.

So what I'm trying to say is even if we're not positioned in a perfect way to achieve a truly, truly absolutely fool-proof agreement with Iranians that in effect precludes them from being coequal with a lot of other nuclear generating nations, we have that option and I think we have to exercise it on behalf of stability in the region and guarantee not just Israel, which may be offended by being guaranteed by us, but anyone in the region whom the Iranians could threaten with their nuclear weapons.

Then let me make one final point. What we don't really pay much attention to, that the fact is that the real nuclear player in that region is someone else. It's not Iran, and in my judgment it's not going to be soon. Pakistan. Pakistan has a lot of nuclear weapons and it's increasing the range of its delivery capabilities. That is food for thought.

**Thomas Friedman:** You know, Bob, Kerry said something to the point you made. One of the weaknesses I've always found in certain school of Israeli analysis of the countries around them which they tend to relate to through newspapers – I mean, I'm not talking about the Basadur [phonetic] or what-not, but daily – if you talk to Netanyahu, Israel has politics. In fact, his hands are tied in the peace process. If he does anything that [indiscernible] some parties that have come in, if he doesn't install a kosher kitchen in the Ministry of Interior by 5:00, he's out of the government. He's just, "You know, my hands are tied." We have politics in Israel. Saudi Arabia has politics. Turkey has politics. America has politics. Only Iran has no politics. All 80 million people want to get a bomb and drop it on the Jews the next day. That's basically what we are being told.

I think one of the predicates, one of the presuppositions of this deal is actually Iran has more politics or has much politics as any country in that region. If you open up the cleavage by easing the sanctions and rewarding people who want to have greater outreach with the outside world and actually deliver something for them that they can then leverage in their internal politics, you also begin to change the whole equation. That's very much part of the presuppositions of this deal.

**Bob Schieffer:** Bob, let me ask you this. Let's say we make a deal. How can we be sure that the Iranians aren't cheating on us? Are our technical capabilities good enough that we can be reasonably certain that when we make a deal, we'll know if they break it?

**Robert Einhorn:** The interim deal, we have very high confidence that the International Atomic Energy Agency can verify every element of that. That's really not a problem. The more problematic issue will come in a final deal if one is concluded, and there you have to do something more difficult. You'll have to be confident that they don't have a covert program, a clandestine program.

Now, the Iranians don't have a good track record at keeping a covert program covert. They had an enrichment program - the enrichment facility at Natanz; the MEK, a dissident group ousted it. They had another covert enrichment program near the Holy City of Qom. Western intelligence agencies discovered it during 2009. It's made, I think, the Iranians a bit weary of being able to keep a covert program covert, and they paid a very high price for those. The price they've paid was crippling sanctions. Their economy is in the gutter now, and so they're going to be wary of doing this. But we're going to have to insist on some very intrusive verification measures to be able to give some measure of confidence that they don't have covert facilities going forward.

**Bob Schieffer:** What do you think the best deal could be from a practical standpoint? I mean we know what Prime Minister Netanyahu says, "Just everything. Stop everything. Dismantle everything." What do you think is the best we can do?

**Thomas Friedman:** I think the President has more or less said it, but I think it's that you reduce Iran's enrichment capability down to the level required for it to generate the electricity it claims it needs and is the justification for this program, and you convert its heavy water reactor to light water, and you have intrusive inspections on everything else. I think Bob is the real expert on this and I'd be interested on his thoughts. But I think then you're putting a year, a year-and-a-half between any breakout capability for that program.

**Bob Schieffer:** Would that be the goal really, I mean, when you come right down to the key down by a year-and-a-half away from –

**Thomas Friedman:** To keep them substantially alert.

**Robert Einhorn:** Conceptually, what I think we should be trying to do; we want to be able to detect any effort at breaking out of constraints immediately. That's why you have daily inspections. You want an enrichment program that's so tightly constrained in numbers of centrifuges and in enriched uranium available so that the breakout timeline is long. The breakout timeline is the time from breakout decision to like having enough highly enriched uranium for a bomb. You want that as long as possible. Why do you want it as long as possible? So that you can intervene to stop them from building a nuclear weapon. That's the critical thing. People say it should be three months or six months or 12 months before they do it. It's a kind of subjective question.

The real issue is does the international community have the will to intervene once they've detected it, and that's a key question. If you have great confidence that the U.S. or Israel or somebody is going to intervene to prevent a bomb from being built, then it could be three months. If you have no confidence, it can be 18 months or two years and it's not adequate. So that's a critical element of it. When the deal is concluded, the international community has got to reach agreement that if there's a violation or if there's a breakout, then there'll be firm consequences and predictable consequences. To me, that's a critical element.

**Zbigniew Brzezinski:** I have no problem with that except it's hard for me to imagine firm commitments by the international community that there would be consequences if by that is meant that the international community would be prepared to do something. Ultimately, it will be either the United States alone or conceivably with someone else, but I frankly find it hard to imagine who that someone else would be.

I think what we have to add to what has been said with most of which I agree is this: We have to operate in a fashion that a volatile political entity, which is an 80 million nation, is not driven into circumstances in which it feels somehow or other - its identity, its self-pride, its status - requires them again to engage in surreptitious efforts to obtain nuclear weapons. That is a political calculus and that, I conclude, leads me to the view that we have to be also sensitive of their pride and their status.

There are a lot of nations that have signed the NPT and we have to be able to find some sort of a measure that puts them somewhere in that category while precluding the ability to engage in a rapid and significant nuclear program, which is what they try to do but which they've failed to achieve in part because it's not easy to hide. It's not easy to hide. Then we have all of these additional inspections that we will now be having, it's going to be increasingly difficult to

do that. So we have to be careful not to slide into a position in which an accommodation to the majority of Iranians begins to look like a one-sided capitulation.

**Thomas Friedman:** Bob, I have something to elaborate on some things Zbig said earlier. If I were 40 years younger and back in college looking for a PhD thesis, it would be called Iraq in 1991 to 2003. It would be about what the UN sanctions did to basically crush Iraqi society so that when we finally did invade Iraq, we didn't find people throwing flowers at us. We found people, really, a society that had been devastated by international sanctions, and we are still paying the price today.

In Iraq we've already left. We didn't crush that society because of the leader they had. I'm talking about, you know, that's why I think this is an ideal moment to bring these sanction regime and test it if we can get negotiations. This is a great civilization. This is not some desert country. This is a great civilization. It has enormous potential given a different approach to its own future.

**Zbigniew Brzezinski:** Can I just add one point? I think it's a very important point. I just want to add to it the following. We have to take into account the Iranian memories of recent times. During the Iraqi-Iranian war, the Iraqis were using chemical weapons against the Iranians. Guess who was helping Iraq select and hit targets? I don't even want to say it but you all know what the answer is. It embarrasses me so much.

**Bob Schieffer:** I want to go to the question, but let me just ask one question and then we'll go to all of you for your questions. How does Syria figure in to all of this? Who would like to talk about that?

**Zbigniew Brzezinski:** Well, certainly it's a complication because it's going to be an additional factor in the course of the next few months. Namely, is there going to be a terrain in which we have to be engaged in some sort of forcible solution in which case a collision with Iran, at least on a limited scale, is more likely or is it going to be something on that international umbrella that is now extant that we will be able to achieve some sort of progress and, therefore, calm down that aspect that otherwise could be very inflammatory to the relationship.

**Thomas Friedman:** But what I say is your question really is a reminder. I think, again, it's often forgotten by some members of Congress that we actually have independent interests in this region from any of our allies or enemies, that we approach this region in a different way. We are ending a decade in which post-9/11 we decided we're going to try to deal with this region directly with boots on the ground. That has proven extremely costly to people there and to us, and we know the whole story. Yet, we still have an interest even more than ever in a stable Middle East. One way we want to stabilize this region is the traditional way of balance of forces, balance of power. Part of that balance is between Sunnis and Shias. Let's not forget because the Iranians certainly don't.

I was in Tehran and interviewed Javad Zarif about this in 2002 that Iran played a vital role in helping us defeat the Taliban which was also their enemy, a fundamentalist Sunni militia. When we wanted to get out of Afghanistan and preserve some of our gains, we will need Iran again as an ally in this. So we have interest in this region and in a relationship with Iran to both

balance the Sunni part of the Arab world and to deal with Northern Asia, Pakistan, and Afghanistan after we leave in which we have a lot of shared interest.

Now, Syria is a place of confrontation but what's happened basically is that the sanctions regime disguised the very divergent interest of all the parties underneath, particularly Saudi Arabia, Israel, and the United States. Saudi Arabia wants Iran that has no nuclear weapon, but it also wants a weak Iran. Period, paragraph ended. It does not want a strong Shia Persian competitor, the second largest oil producer in the region.

We've had a very unnatural situation 34 years ago. The Middle East is like a family and the big brother Iran one day walked out and slammed the door. Zbig took his shoes. I took his bed, and Bob took his bicycle. We all got used to having our own totally monopolized relationship with Uncle Sam. One day, 34 years later, knock, knock, big brother is back. He wants his bicycle, his tennis shoes, his bed, and his own relationship - oh my god - with Uncle Sam, and the region is freaked out. And that's the psychology of what's going on.

**Bob Schieffer:** You do want to say anything on that? Well, let's go right here.

**Josh Rogin:** Thank you so much. Thank you for your time today. Thank you for your service. My name is Josh Rogin. I'm a reporter with the *Daily Beast* website here in Washington. First of all, it seems pretty clear that the number one point of contention as this deal goes to Congress is the tentative plan to negotiate Iran's ability to maintain some level of uranium enrichment albeit under safeguards. Now, my question is how can we be sure - since such a safeguards will depend on continuous monitoring, and evaluations, and inspections – that that won't allow Iran to maintain its status as a threshold nuclear weapon state at ad infinitum? In other words, can a final deal that allows Iran to have any uranium enrichment capacity really be considered final?

My second very quick unrelated follow up is for Mr. Einhorn, and that is what about North Korea? If they're ramping up their own uranium enrichment program, is there a possibility that that could become Iran's store of highly enriched uranium just located in another location? Thank you.

**Robert Einhorn:** On the enrichment program, I think the Iranians are going to be surprised at how token the P5+1 require its enrichment program to be. The joint plan of action that was agreed talked about a mutually defined enrichment program consistent with practical needs. Now, the way the P5+1 governments view those practical needs is very limited. They have enrichment. They have a research reactor in Tehran that already has enough fuel for a few decades. They have a power reactor in Bushehr that the Russians provide fuel for. They don't need any fuel for that. On the drawing board, they have some other research reactors planned, but they have not broken ground on them. For their foreseeable future, they have very little practical need, so I think the P5+1 are within their rights to call for very, very limited enrichment program which would provide very little breakout capability.

On the North Korean case, I think these are very different cases. The North Koreans have cheated from day one. They've had nuclear weapons. In 1992, they agreed with the South Koreans not to have enrichment or reprocessing capabilities. Even if there is a limited enrichment program allowed in the final deal with Iran, I don't think the North Koreans can legitimately say we want one too.

**Male Voice:** [Indiscernible] from the Arab League. I wonder here whether the Israelis are really concerned or seriously concerned about the Iranian nuclear program? Perhaps they are more concerned psychologically if we know that they are the only power in the region that possess nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, the second in the world maybe next is North Korea. Now is it really or is it to divert the attention of the Arab countries from the main conflict, the main issue, the Arab-Israeli conflict to the Iranian threat so that they make us believe that the threat is not Israeli, that it is the Iran. This is where it seems the Arab world is buying with billions of dollars in weapons. [Indiscernible] just now or yesterday is working about a missile umbrella for defense of the Gulf Countries only. Thank you.

**Zbigniew Brzezinski:** I must say the microphone is distorting. It was. Up here it's very difficult.

**Robert Einhorn:** Exactly. I have the same reaction. I couldn't stand it.

**Zbigniew Brzezinski:** Could you just say that without speaking into the microphone? It distorted your voice. Give me the thrust of your question again.

**Male Voice:** I'm just saying that I want whether the Israelis are really concerned about the Iranian nuclear program? Perhaps they are psychologically more concerned. We know that there's a bargain. Or is it really a way of diverting the conflict of the Arab countries from the main conflict, which is the Arab-Israeli conflict to the Iranian threat?

**Thomas Friedman:** I get the point. Let me just say if you talk to the Arab countries today, they're a lot more concerned about Iran than they are about the Israeli-Palestinian issue. If you listen to what's coming out of Saudi Arabia, the UAE, the Gulf countries in particular. If anyone is diverting things, what we have is a tacit line - it's been quite written about - between Israel and Saudi Arabia now where they're both obsessed with the Iran issue.

Now, one could argue - this is not provable - that each one has its interest in diverting attention from domestic issues, whether it is the Israel-Palestinian thing, Saudi Arabia in the wake of the Arab Spring not wanting people to focus on that question. But to suggest that the Arab countries really want to talk about the Israel-Palestine question and only Israel wants to talk about Iran I think would be a complete misreading of what's actually going on in the region. The reason we have the tacit lines now between Saudi Arabia and Israel is that they're much more obsessed about the Iran issue right now at the government level than they are with the Israeli-Palestinian question.

**Female Voice:** Thank you very much. Christine Marcus-Avesent [phonetic]. When I was at Johns Hopkins SAIS, I had the privilege of having an army general come in and speak to my class about Chinese-U.S. military relations. When he was finished speaking, I asked him, what kind of trust-building exercise could the U.S. and China do together that would be effective? Without skipping a beat he answered, "Pirate catching." I thought, okay, applying that thinking here, what sort of trust-building exercise could the U.S. and Iran do post this particular scenario, let's say it goes well, that would not give Saudi Arabia and Israel heart palpitations and from mostly political as opposed to a military standpoint show the world that the U.S. and Iran can get along in more ways than this? Thank you.

**Robert Einhorn:** I'll just say I know that they would like to comment there. It's interesting when I was involved in these negotiations with the Iranians over the last five years, they would come to us and say, let's spend time working on Syria and Bahrain, and we said we would not do it. We knew that our Gulf friends would be outraged if we start talking about these sensitive issues without their participation and without their knowledge, so we refused. [Indiscernible] said let's work on anti-piracy together.

**Thomas Friedman:** Thank God for pirates. There will always be pirates.

**Brenda Shaffer:** Hi, Brenda Shaffer at Georgetown University. These sanctions were so successful because the number of allies really took a big risk to join the sanctions, especially states that are bordering Iran like Azerbaijan and Emirates as you mentioned. What's your advice? Mr. Friedman, what's your advice to these countries that sort of put their security on the line for the United States and for these sanctions often in very uncomfortable risky positions. These countries are already getting the payback from Iran. They have the means for destabilization in Azerbaijan and Emirates and a variety of Gulf states. What would be your advice to these states and to Washington?

**Thomas Friedman:** The short answer I think is [indiscernible] to my question. I think that they deserve the best deal we can get. We have to negotiate the kind of deal that Bob has been talking about. I think if we do, they will feel that their investment in this process was justified but I think we owe them that. Again, I'm not uncomfortable with Netanyahu out there doing his Dr. Strangelove thing and the others. It's good to have a little crazy on your side, you know, when you're negotiating in that part of the world. So I hope they keep the pressure up. I have no problem with that.

**Bob Schieffer:** Right there.

**Stephen Larrabee:** Steve Larrabee, RAND. To Dr. Brzezinski, it seems to me that the United States had said that there was no direct and formal relationship between the nuclear Iranian deal and Syria. On the other hand, I think it's inconceivable that it isn't in some way indirectly linked because if the deal goes forward, Iran is going to have to think about any move it makes in Syria or towards Syria, what impact that will have on negotiating on the nuclear deal and so will the United States. So it seems to me there is a relationship. Do you disagree with that?

**Zbigniew Brzezinski:** I agree that there is a relationship. If there is some movement on the Syria issue, it makes it somewhat easier to have some sort of an arrangement regarding the nuclear issue and vice versa. And if you are an Iranian realizing that your country is in the midst of really significant division regarding its future position in that region, and if you are concerned that the American disengagement from Afghanistan might unleash new problems in the region, I think you would want to have a situation in which some sort of stable relationship with the United States is in fact a reality.

The Iranians after all are very much aware of the fact that they are living in a region in which sectarianism is rising. It can become totally destructive for the entire region for most of

the countries in the region. Hence, some sort of an accommodation not only with the United States but an accommodation which involves also China, it involves Russia, it involves Europe, gives them the option of becoming a more seriously viewed and a more positively accepted participant in the international process from which they have largely excluded themselves. I think it is the sense of sudden awakening to the overall consequences of what has been happening over the last thirty years that has stirred the more articulate Iranian public into an increasingly significant revision of their attitudes.

**Peter Sharpman:** I'm Peter Sharpman, MITRE Corporation. Do you think that there is actually enough common ground for a deal if you were mediating the negotiations? Is there an outcome that would be acceptable to Iran with its politics, and to the United States with its politics, and to our allies with their politics?

**Robert Einhorn:** I can't do better than the president, I am 50/50. The gaps really are large. We have in mind a tiny enrichment program that genuinely is consistent with their very minimal needs. They talk about 20 big nuclear reactors and so forth, which is an aspiration that will never be achieved. They want to keep this Arak plutonium production reactor functioning. We think it has only one legitimate purpose. I mean, not legitimate, one intended purpose which is to produce plutonium for nuclear weapons. We want it destroyed or turned into a light water reactor. They have an underground enrichment facility that we thought was going to be part of a covert military program. We would like it destroyed or repurposed. They want to keep it running.

There are huge gaps. One huge gap is the duration of the final deal. It was papered over in the interim agreement. We talked about long-term duration. It's important because at the end of that duration, Iran can have the rights that other nonnuclear weapon states party to the NPT can have. In other words, the special restrictions on enrichment and so forth go away. So the United States wants that length to be 20, 30 more years. The Iranians want it in single digits. So these are going to be hard issues, hard differences to bridge.

**Thomas Friedman:** I think there's a non-technical answer to your question. I think it was being alluded to. I think it's how Iran chooses to define its future. Does it want to be a big North Korea? Or does it want to be a small China? Does it want to see its future? Does being a bigger sort of global outlaw, always kind of fighting and bumping up and chafing against its neighbors in the world? Or does it want to define its power as unleashing its remarkable people in a way that will enable them to realize their full potential with a little nuclear program on the side?

**Zbigniew Brzezinski:** Let me just add to that, I agree with every word that Tom said. But there is also an American side to that. What do we want to impose on Iran? How far are we prepared to go with insistence on arrangements, which in addition to being very strict can be massively humiliating and self destructive, and reverse what to me is an important process of change within Iran? Which it is in our interest to reinforce and to make Iran a more constructive player in a part of the world in which we have a variety of interests all of which are increasingly under stress, and in which we may be increasingly challenged. I don't think that any of us want to repeat some of the recent experiences we've had in that region.

**Thomas Friedman:** It's hard to see if anything has damaged our interest more or cost us more grief, expense, and wasted energy than the Iran-U.S. Cold War over the last 34 years.

**Zbigniew Brzezinski:** So sometimes the ideal can be an enemy of the adequate. I am in favor of an adequate arrangement with Iran but not an ideal arrangement which, yes, is foolproof, absolutely, like a fail-safe parachute will never fail, which has the effect of forcing someone to commit suicide and take us with them.

**Marco di Capua:** Marco di Capua, National Nuclear Security Administration. Is it possible that Iran's perception of its security environment has radically changed to the point where they have decided they might not need nuclear weapons anymore?

**Zbigniew Brzezinski:** I think it is possible, but the question still remains, how much of a leeway do they have in having an essentially peaceful nuclear program? And how strict do we want to be to make sure that under no circumstances ever, ever can they cheat for a while? But the record is that even when the inspections and everything else was much more lax, their attempts to cheat in secrecy failed. It's not a simple process so that we do have a lot of opportunities to say, hey, wait a minute, you are violating on these arrangements. You are going beyond the spirit, and then return to some arrangement, including threats, including renewed sanctions if we can and so forth.

The Iranians are not suicidal; let's just get that across. There is a whole notion that they are ready to commit suicide the moment they get an alleged bomb creates a mental attitude towards this problem which is self-destructive. It precludes any possibility of a reasonable accommodation.

**Thomas Friedman:** I would just add that ultimately, the only way you get that sure, sure, sure foolproof thing is when you have a change in the character of the Iranian regime. And part of this whole process is to initiate or to enhance actually what has already begun. We saw that with the 2009 green revolution of an Iranian effort to change the character of their regime.

We, in this country, we saw the Soviet Union die with 80,000 nuclear warheads in its bunker. I don't think there are many Americans who don't sleep tonight because they're worried about the Soviet nuclear capability. But in fact they threaten us if they wanted to. China can threaten us. But when the character of the regime changes, that changes the whole equation and that's got to be part of the dynamic here.

**Robert Einhorn:** I'll just add to that. I don't think that they made a strategic decision not to have nuclear weapons. In 2003 when we invaded Iraq, they put on hold one element of their program, the weaponization part. They didn't abandon nuclear weapons; they deferred it. They're going to wait until the coast is clear. The coast hasn't cleared and they saw there's tremendous cost to be paid for being caught cheating and so forth. I think it's an open question; it's a nuclear weapons program that's on the shelf. And our job in this agreement is to keep them as far away from a near breakout capability as we can, to deter any decision for them to cross the threshold and to keep deterring them from crossing that threshold until there is a basic change in character, and they can make that strategic [cross-talking].

**Thomas Friedman:** I just have one thing. This is a very relevant point which is that if you asked what's the biggest thing happening in the Middle East since 2010? It's been a pan region-wide movement since 2009 - the green revolution of young people throughout the Muslim Middle East. Realizing they were living in what I call a flat world where they could see how everybody else was living, just how far behind they were, and demanding governments that enabled them to realize their full potential. If you ask me, that's the biggest thing that's been happening. If you ask me what will define this region in ten years, it will not be how much enrichment Iran has or is allowed. It will be whether and how governments respond to that movement in a region where 75 percent of the population is under the age of 30. Let's not forget that.

**Bob Schieffer:** This will have to be our final question.

**Greg Craig:** My name is Greg Craig from Skadden. I wonder if the panel would comment on the internal dynamics inside the P5+1 and whether you have confidence that over the next six months it would remain on the same page with all our negotiating partners. Under the best of circumstances, this is going to be a very challenging negotiation, diplomatic objective. There was some reason to believe that there were internal stresses between the P5+1 as we approached the preparatory agreement. I'd be curious to know what you think about how the P5+1 are going to work together going forward.

**Robert Einhorn:** The president has admitted, administration officials have admitted that there was substantial bilateral interaction between the U.S. and the Iranians in the run up to the November 24<sup>th</sup> agreement. In fact, the piece of paper that was given to the P5+1 representatives by Catherine Ashton of the EU, it was a U.S.-Iranian draft with a few bracketed formulations. It had been cooked up in bilateral discussions. This took us a number of our P5+1 partners by surprise. They would've liked to have a greater role in the production of this document. I think this led to Foreign Minister Fabius' public remarks on that Friday in Geneva. But I think they recovered very quickly. Within twenty-four hours, they had a consensus text that they gave to the Iranians.

But I think going forward, managing that group would be difficult. I think they all realize on the one hand, if there really is going to be progress, it would be the result of a U.S.-Iranian bilateral interaction. On the other hand, they have a legitimate role. The EU sanctions played a critical role in moving the Iranian calculus. Also, you have the Russians and Chinese who would be happy to have any deal. They're not going to want to be as fussy as we are going to want to be in a final outcome. So I think management going ahead is going to be pretty tricky.

**Zbigniew Brzezinski:** I think that by and large, all the participants in that process outside of Iran have a shared interest in the situation being resolved and in any case not letting it slide into a state in which eventually some sort of an explosion takes place and massive regional violence erupts. So, in that sense, there is consensus. But I think there is subtle difference perhaps in the longer range interest of the Europeans, the Japanese, and us on one side, and the Russians to some extent. The Russians still view us as rivals in that area, and they would like to regain some of their influence. At the same time, they don't want to go too far, and they don't want a collision with us. But they may be tempted at some point to take a deviant position.

I think the Chinese basically [sounds like] are interested in resolving this issue so there is no violence because they are interested essentially in a steady flow of oil at a reasonable price, and they will have neither if there is an eruption. The Europeans have no choice but to go with us even if occasionally one of them wants to posture a little bit as the French did for some other reasons. The Russians might at some point want to test us. And here, the difference could arise over actually Syria rather than Iran because the Russians feel they have particular historical ties with Syria, and they have a role to play.

To some extent, it's a symbolic expression of the regional influence. There is also the potential tie between escalating violence in the region especially in Syria and instability in the southern Caucuses. And the Russians there feel very vulnerable. They have different feelings, mixed feelings, and this is what restrains them in my view. So that in the end, if push came to shove, and I had to say, yes, will they be helpful or will they create problems for us? Outside, they'd probably be helpful in the sense they will all agree, but we mustn't rub Iran's nose in the dirt in order to get an agreement.

**Thomas Friedman:** I'd simply say this is a very good question. I would make two points. One is something has been apparent from the start, which is that the sanction's regime disguised multiple and different interests of the parties. The minute you go from that to cashing it in to a final deal, those different interests are going to make themselves apparent. And the question is, as Bob and Zbig said, how much, what trade-offs?

But I would venture a reckless statement, which is that I think it's going to be very hard to get a successful deal if we also don't make some progress on Syria because it is hard for me to imagine all these actors agreeing on Iran and then having a widening Syrian civil war where many of the same parties are contesting one other and acting in ways that are very frightening to one another. I think it's going to be hard. So I hope that we both use these six months to give the Iran deal and to find some way to get a ceasefire at a minimum in Syria so neither side sees themselves losing ground in both theaters at the same time.

**Bob Schieffer:** Ladies and gentlemen, thank you all so much for coming. Thanks to our panelists.

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