



Interview With Associated Press Correspondent Henry Meyers

R. Nicholas Burns, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs

Hotel Marriott Grand
Moscow, Russia
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AP REPORTER MEYERS: Can you tell me whether there were any proposals made today for targeted sanctions against Iran – was that discussed this evening?

UNDER SECRETARY BURNS: Well let me do this...first of all, I had a very good and constructive meeting with the Chinese Assistant Foreign Minister today. He and I met bilaterally and then, of course, we had our dinner hosted by the Russian Political Director, Sergei Kislyak, Deputy Foreign Minister. All the people were in attendance there. It was a very good and constructive meeting. It's a difficult problem; it's a challenge for all the countries concerned. I can only speak for the United States in saying that it's our sense that on the big issue, there is concurrence that none of us want to see Iran acquire nuclear weapons capability. All of us voted together in the IAEA Board of Governors to rebuke Iran for having exceeded in its nuclear research what the international community can support; all of us voted – or many of us – voted for the Presidential Statement at the Security Council just twenty days ago, as a second rebuke to Iran. And so, we had a very good and constructive conversation tonight. We agreed that we're going to continue to talk. And obviously, we've got to await now the report by EIBaradai, Mohammed EIBaradai on April 28th, on whether or not Iran is in conformance with its international obligations. The view of the United States is that Iran is definitely not in compliance because Iran just last week took steps to further the enrichment process and announced that it hopes to proceed to a centrifuge experiment with 3,000 centrifuges by the end of this year, and we believe it's engaged in also P-2 centrifuge research. So, the Iranian violations of their responsibilities to the IAEA, and to the United Nations Security Council are, in the American view, substantial. And we think that Mr. EIBaradai can only find them to be in non-compliance; and so therefore we expect further action in the Security Council in the month of May.

AP REPORTER MEYERS: But have the Russians given any indication that they are willing to support (inaudible) consequences for Iran?

UNDER SECRETARY BURNS: I'm going to have to let the Russians – I can't speak for the Russian government. You'll have to ask the Russian government what its views are. All I know is that I think Iran's actions last week have deepened concern in the international community. And all of us agreed that the actions last week were fundamentally negative and a step backward. And so now the task for us is to agree on the way forward.

AP REPORTER MEYERS: OK, one final question. So, you didn't answer my first question, which was, was there any discussion this evening of possible sanctions against Iran?

UNDER SECRETARY BURNS: I think there is increased discussion – not just in the group with which we met tonight, but in the world as a whole – about the need for a stiff response to Iran's flagrant violations of its international responsibilities, particularly the enrichment decision of last week, and that more and more countries are talking about the need for some type of sanctions against Iran. No question about it, and we heard some of that tonight.

AP REPORTER MEYERS: And Russia and China are in the same position...

UNDER SECRETARY BURNS: I'm going to have to – I'm not going to speak for Russia and China. I don't want to speak for Russia and China.

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