Mr. Engel

Mr. ENGEL. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I have

listened to a lot of what everyone says.

Let me first of all congratulate Ambassador Burns in his new

role. I know that you have a long and distinguished career, and

personally I am very happy to see to see you in your new role. And

thank you for your testimony.

I just want to make a statement. You know, nobody wants war.

I mean, given the debacle in Iraq, nobody wants war with Iran.

The shame is that the people of Iran—I know a lot of Iranian-

Americans who have family in Iran. The average person on the

street likes America. In many ways, we should be natural allies.

But I think also what disturbs me is how some people, in their

zest for not wanting war, become apologists for what essentially is

a fascist regime in Iran. I mean, it really is. It oppresses its own

people. It is a theocracy, no rights for its populations. Reformers

that attempt to run for office are disqualified, so you really don’t

have any kind of contest. And I just don’t think that in our zest

to not want war—and none of us want war—that we don’t become

apologists for a fascist regime in Iran. Because that is what they

really are.

And when Ahmadinejad says that he wants to wipe Israel off the

face of the Earth, I believe him. And I don’t think it is only Israel

he would like to wipe off. I think there are a lot of other countries,

ours as well, that he would like to do it.

And I remain convinced that the best way to avoid war is to

sanction them and to make sure that their refined petroleum—that

we make it very hard for them to function by trying to block the

refined petroleum.

I want to ask you, though, because we have heard, and I think

what makes, for me, the Iranian regime dangerous is that they are

certainly the leading supporter of terrorism around the world. And

I would like to ask you some questions about that.

Iran’s deliveries of rockets to Hezbollah and to Iraqi Shiite militias,

in my estimation, appear to constitute a violation of Resolution

1747, which bans Iranian export of arms.

So I would like to ask you: How is the administration or the U.N.

holding Iran accountable for these violations? And how, if at all, is

the administration or the U.N. holding accountable those states

which facilitate such exports?

Mr. ENGEL. Let me ask you this: The State Department, for

many years, has named Iran not only as the world’s leading state

sponsor of terror, but as, I quote, ‘‘the central bank for terrorism.’’

So could you tell us specifically, what is the state of Iran’s support

for international terrorism, specifically Hamas and Hezbollah?

And reports continue to indicate the massive re-arming of

Hezbollah in Lebanon. What role does Iran play in the arming of

Hezbollah? And what is UNIFIL doing to stop the re-arming of

Hezbollah?

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you.