This hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee is called to order.

Let me say at the outset that the committee looks forward to

hearing carefully and respectfully the testimony of each of its witnesses.

In furtherance of this goal, the chair will give an opening

statement, and I will call upon the distinguished ranking member,

Senator Biden, to give his statement. Then I will ask Senator

Biden to recess the committee for 10 minutes so that members can

vote at a time that is now designated at about 10:35, as the Chair

understands the vote. That way we will all be reassembled to hear

together Secretary Armitage’s testimony and hopefully have clear

sailing after that point. After I give my statement, I will depart

and attempt to achieve the voting process so that I can return and

make certain that we are able to truncate the recess as much as possible.

Today the committee is pleased to welcome Deputy Secretary of

State Richard Armitage to review United States policy toward Iran.

Secretary Armitage is a good friend of the committee and we always

look forward to our discussions with him.

Despite some signs of reform in recent years, Iran continues to

pose a serious regional and global security threat through its active

support for terrorism and its continued efforts to develop weapons

of mass destruction in direct violation of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

Today’s hearing is especially timely given the agreement reached

last week by the Foreign Ministers of the United Kingdom, Germany,

France, and Iran. This agreement narrowly complies with

the October 31 deadline set by the International Atomic Energy

Agency, IAEA, for Iran to fully disclose the nature of its nuclear

program. By agreeing to accept enhanced United Nations inspections

of its nuclear facilities and to temporarily suspend its enrichment

of uranium that could be used to make nuclear weapons, Iran

hopes to avoid international sanctions.

The Europeans consider this a significant step toward ensuring

that Iran’s nuclear program is benign. Although Americans are

hopeful that this agreement does represent progress, we should not

lose sight of the fact that Iran was caught red-handed trying to

build nuclear weapons through several methods over a sustained

period in violation of its treaty obligations. After years of Iranian

delay, deception, and denial, this agreement should not lead us to

a false sense of security about the Iranian proliferation threat.

In fact, the head of Iran’s National Security Council reportedly

told Reuters that the decision to suspend uranium enrichment was

temporary and would last only as long as the Iranian leaders believe

that it fits their purposes.

It is far from clear that the additional inspections to which Iran

has agreed will prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear capability,

because they rely on Tehran telling the truth. The international

community must be prepared to take more effective action.

When confronted with a case as blatant as Iran, the United

States and like-minded allies must use the Security Council of the

United Nations to demand that the violator cease all illegal weapons

activities, dismantle weapons-related facilities, and submit to

super inspections, even tougher than those imposed on Iraq. Elements

should include unfettered freedom for inspectors, unsupervised

interviews of nuclear scientists and engineers out of the country

with their families, if necessary, and unrestrained aerial surveillance.

Iran may object that such intrusive inspections impinge

on its sovereignty, but this is the price Tehran should be paying

to convince outsiders that for once it is keeping its word under the

Nonproliferation Treaty. By demanding that Iran prove that it is

living up to the NPT, the Security Council would strengthen that treaty.

Some will object that such strong action may force Iran’s ruling

mullahs to walk out of the NPT. But keeping Iran in the NPT

should not be an end in itself. The treaty is useful only to the extent

that its provisions are enforced to prevent states from acquiring

nuclear weapons. If the international community were persuaded

to work together, we would have substantial leverage over

Iran. An Iranian withdrawal from the NPT would halt the Russian

reactor deal and cooperation with other nuclear suppliers, expose

Iran’s naked nuclear ambitions for all to see, and stiffen international

resolve for tough economic sanctions.

In the short run, our allies may be inclined to give Tehran the

benefit of the doubt, partly to avoid a confrontation and partly to

preserve commercial opportunities in Iran. But the United States

should begin laying the groundwork now for a decisive international

response to any additional violations.

Iran’s pursuit of nuclear weapons is not the only threat it poses

to international security. Iran is a major state sponsor of terrorism.

It continues to support Hezbollah in Lebanon and to fund Hamas

and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, who employ violence and suicide

bombers to frustrate the Arab-Israeli peace process.

Iran remained neutral as the U.S. and coalition forces removed

Saddam Hussein from power. But Iran maintains close ties with

several Iraqi Shiite Islamic factions and appears to be instigating

these groups to undermine coalition efforts to rebuild Iraq. In addi-

tion, Iran claims to have al-Qaeda terrorists in custody. It is unclear,

however, if Iran is sheltering the terrorists, holding them as

leverage to use in dealings with the U.S., or pursuing another agenda.

The United States is also concerned by the political, religious,

and gender repression perpetrated by the ruling clerics on their

own people. These struggles were highlighted when Shirin Ebadi,

a courageous Iranian woman who has brought world attention to

Iran’s human rights violations, received the 2003 Nobel Peace Prize.

President Bush has pursued a policy of containing Iran while employing

selective engagement, as has almost every American administration

for the last 2 decades. Within this context of containment,

the challenges before U.S. policymakers are how we can

change Iranian behavior in key areas, how U.S. policy can take advantage

of opportunities created by reformist elements within Iranian

society, and how we can generate more support from our allies

on issues pertaining to Iran. Our response to these challenges will

help shape the future of the Middle East and will have significant

impact on the outcome of the global war on terrorism.

Mr. Secretary, we thank you for your participation in this important

hearing, and we are anxious to hear your assessments in due course.

The committee is also pleased to be joined today by a second

panel of distinguished experts. With us will be Ambassador William

Luers, president of the U.N. Association; Dr. Nasser Hadian

of Tehran University, who is a visiting professor at Columbia University;

Dr. Anthony Cordesman, the Arleigh A. Burke Chair for

Strategy at the Center for Strategic and International Studies; and

Dr. Robert Einhorn, senior adviser for the International Security

Program also at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

We will welcome all of our witnesses during the course of the

hearing, but I call now upon the distinguished ranking member, Senator Biden.

The committee is called to order again.

We will be joined by our colleagues, as they complete the voting

process. Senator Alexander has arrived with me, and so at least

the audience is two of us, Secretary Armitage, but we promise more

to come. We are grateful to you, as always, for coming today and

look forward to your testimony. Would you please proceed?

Your full statement will be put in the record.

Well, Secretary Armitage, you have touched upon

the population situation. You just said that 70 percent of the population

is under 30. Commentators in the United States point out

that many of the people under 30 are often characterized as being

dissatisfied with their living conditions such as high unemployment,

which is higher still among those who are particularly young

and who do not have a foothold in the society. Yet, as you pointed

out, the democratic process has not proceeded very well. A 30 percent

voting rate indicates the degree of apathy or cynicism about

the situation. For most Americans, we wonder what gives. Many

people in the area who are apparently pro-democracy are polled

with very different reactions.

Contradictions, as you say, abound, but what is likely to happen

in this situation with this kind of population, this kind of ferment,

this desire for democracy, which thus just has not worked out particularly

well? And now we have international scrutiny because of

weapons of mass destruction. These young people or other adherents

for democracy see Europeans, not just the United States, but

also the United Nations, the weapons inspectors coming in saying

you are headed toward the production of nuclear weapons, and the

world does not like that. How can you foresee the future given these circumstances?

We, that is, the United States, have issues with

Iran with regard to weapons of mass destruction and with regard

to the state sponsorship of terrorism, by Hezbollah and Hamas, for

example. Now, as you suggest, perhaps even with a democratic regime,

perhaps even among the young people, they would still want

to produce weapons of mass destruction.

Where is the rest of the world in this situation? We have had the

European intervention, and so obviously they and the IAEA have

taken this seriously. But is the rest of the world as concerned as

the United States is about the weapons program or about the state

sponsorship of terrorism?

Even though we are sympathetic with the democracy that might

arise from the aspirations of the young people, as you pointed out,

at the end of the day, if you still have these instruments of terror

and weapons of mass destruction, this is unacceptable in terms of

the United States’ security and a lot of other people’s security.

How are you coming along with diplomatic efforts with European

friends or with the people in the Middle East or with others who might see a similar threat?

Well, is it our intent to pursue the nuclear question

with the United Nations and the Security Council if progress is not satisfactory?

Now, how much solidarity are you and Secretary

Powell having with the Russians on this question? This has been

an open discussion for a long time. Where do things stand now? Thank you very much.

We will have 8 minutes in this round of questioning, and I call now on Senator Hagel.

It was fairly brief. Thank you very much, Senator Hagel.

Thank you very much, Secretary Armitage, for

your testimony and for your response to our questions. As always, it was great to have you.

The chair would like to call now our second

panel: the Honorable William Luers, Dr. Nasser Hadian, Dr. Anthony

Cordesman, and the Honorable Robert J. Einhorn.

Gentlemen, we thank you for coming and we thank you for listening

to our first set of questions to the distinguished Deputy Secretary

of State. Each of you have been with us before, and we appreciate your coming today.

Let me suggest, first of all, that all of your statements will be

made a part of the record, so you need not ask for permission that

that be done. If possible, if you could summarize your statements

in 5 minutes or so, that will allow for more questioning and dialog

with the panel and with Senators. So I will ask you to proceed, if

you can, in that fashion in the order in which I introduced you,

which would be Mr. Luers first, then Mr. Hadian, then Dr.

Cordesman, and finally Dr. Einhorn. Mr. Luers.

Thank you very much, sir. Dr. Hadian.

Well, thank you very much, Dr. Hadian. Your

views, of course, are in the statement, and this will be available to

members and for the record, but perhaps we will be able to get

back to it in the questioning. Dr. Cordesman.

Thank you, Dr. Cordesman. We appreciate, as always,

your testimony and your suggestions. Dr. Einhorn.

Well, thank you very much, Dr. Einhorn. Let me

suggest that we have questioning and maybe 5 minutes each for

each Senator. I will defer to other Senators if they appear or reappear.

Let me just start the questioning by saying that I agree with

you, Dr. Cordesman, that the super inspector idea that I suggested

may or may not be possible. The basic question you have asked

with regard to our intelligence in terms of nonproliferation questions

is a very serious one here in the Iranian case. We are having

public discussion about intelligence in Iraq and even in North

Korea or elsewhere. Ultimately this may be a question that can never be resolved.

On the other hand, I am curious as to whether there are any parallels

between the North Korean and the Iranian situation. I do not

want to stretch that possibility. The North Koreans apparently

have declared that not only are they working on nuclear weapons,

but that they may actually have already produced one or two. The

world questions whether they do or do not have these. Once again,

a very grave intelligence problem has come on an issue that is that

difficult. In Iran no one is making a claim that they have produced

anything to date. The claims on our part are that they have an intent

to do that, and we have been tracing from the Shah onward

some type of national enterprise in that regard.

Should our objective as a nation now be to work with as many

other nations as we can? In the case of North Korea, five others

have been identified. Perhaps a good many could be identified with

regard to Iran so that we might have what might be an nonaggression

pact or a nonaggression piece of paper in which we simply assure

North Korea and assure Iran we do not intend to overthrow

their regimes, and we do not intend to attack them if in fact they

stop their nuclear programs. At least that is apparently the intent

in North Korea. They may or may not be prepared to do that. To

take Dr. Cordesman’s point with regard to Iran, it may be equally

valid in North Korea. How will we know in some cases? What are

the inspector regimes that finally ferret out whether somebody is

keeping their word? So maybe that policy works, maybe it doesn’t.

But for the moment, we seem to be headed on that course in North Korea.

I am just curious with regard to Iran. Perhaps you would employ

softer language here rather than having a six-member group sort

of hovering around Iran. The suggestion is really dialog of various

sorts, informal, but constant on many levels. A thought that somehow

or other that relationship might work, if not to a friendship,

at least to a much greater mutual respect and maybe mutual involvement.

Does anyone want to have a comment about overall policy? Well,

first of all, Mr. Luers, then Dr. Cordesman. Dr. Cordesman.

I thank you. I am going to defer. Let me just carry on.

The dilemma here in terms of our foreign policy is what the

President has often talked about, that is the intersection of weapons

of mass destruction with terrorism. On the one hand, we have

discussed with regard to Iran today that there has been state-sponsored

terrorism. Now, the suggestion is perhaps if the conduct of

Israel and the Palestinians and the Road Map and what have you

had worked out, this might now be less intensive and less developed.

On the other hand, maybe not. It appears that the terrorism

is a part of the current regimes, not the same sort of thing that

existed during the Shah’s days. The SAVAK and the Secret Service

were there, but they were not overt terrorism. So this poses quite a dilemma.

As you point out, Dr. Cordesman, if some program moving almost

to the point of breakout is undetectable ultimately—and the terrorism

is still there, we are on the horns of a dilemma perpetually.

The answer to that—I think you or someone suggested—is that we

better keep a lot of military forces in the area because they might

have to come into action. Now, that then leaves the Iranians to feel

that in fact we are after them and we want to overturn their regime.

How can we finally sort out some sort of a situation here in

which there is even a minimum of mutual trust? Of course, as Dr.

Hadian has said, after all, the self-respect of Iranians is that, by

golly, if they want to have nuclear weapons, nuclear power, all the

rest of it, that is their given right. Well, at least the power part

of it is understandable, even if Iran has all sorts of other resources.

And who are we to determine you should not be doing that sort of thing?

I am just trying to come to grips in my own mind’s eye with how

we divine some degree of American security out of all of this without

at the same time having everybody out of sorts perpetually,

with no possibility of moving on except in these informal contacts

in which we sort of keep in touch sort of looking for better days. Dr. Hadian.

Let me just pass over Mr. Luers for a moment

because I want Senator Biden and Senator Nelson to come into

this, and then we may get back to Mr. Luers. Senator Biden.

I am going to recognize Senator Nelson at this point.

I have to offer parenthetically, as Senator Biden has mentioned

his history with Iran, mine is more limited. But I went with Secretary

Blumenthal on the last mission to see the Shah, and we did

see the Shah. It was a very unpleasant meeting. We saw SAVAK.

We saw lots of people in those days and stayed in the embassy

which was taken over fairly shortly thereafter. But that is then.

This is now. But the need for engagement was true even then, and

that was why that extraordinary mission was undertaken.

Are there other comments? Yes.

Well, we appreciate that counsel and we appreciate

the testimony from each one of you. You have been generous

with your time and your thoughts have stimulated our thinking.

Having said that, why, the hearing is adjourned.