

February 3, 2015

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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YOUNG ISRAEL CALLS ON U.S. TO INCREASE TERRORISM SANCTIONS ON IRAN

The National Council of Young Israel (NCYI) today called on the United States to increase terrorism sanctions on Iran. While there has been much debate about the sanctions imposed on Iran in connection with its nuclear program, the issue of the terrorism sanctions has garnered little, if any attention.

Over the past several decades, Iran has provided hundreds of millions of dollars to Hezbollah in Lebanon and trained its terrorist fighters, and has actively supported terrorist organizations in Gaza, including Hamas, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command, by providing them with funding, weapons, and training.

In addition, Iran is sending its own troops into combat and was the sponsor of the recent Hezbollah attack in Northern Israel, which left two Israeli soldiers dead and several others wounded after their vehicles were hit with anti-tank missiles. That deadly attack was a blatant violation of international law and a direct contravention of United Nations Resolution 1701, which was passed unanimously by the U.N. Security Council in August 2006 and which essentially marked the end of the Second Lebanon War. The resolution called for the disarmament of Hezbollah, although the terrorist group has been amassing a significant cache of weapons over the years.

Due to its repeated support for acts of international terrorism, Iran was designated a "State Sponsor of Terrorism" by the United States on January 19, 1984, and is only one of four countries that have earned that dubious distinction. As a result of this designation, an array of economic sanctions was imposed by the United States on Iran, including bans on arms sales and foreign aid. In 1995, President Clinton issued an Executive Order deeming Iran an "extraordinary national security threat." This Executive Order, which has been renewed by the President every year since its issuance, allows the President to regulate trade with Iran.

"With Iran's proclivity for terrorism and its ongoing support and endorsement of violent acts aimed at innocent human beings, it is time for the United States to ratchet up the terrorism sanctions and send a strong and clear message to Iran that its sponsorship of terrorism will have grave consequences," said NCYI President Farley Weiss. "With Iran's continued backing of reviled terrorist groups, it is apparent that the sanctions that are presently in place are not having the desired effect of deterrence. We therefore urge the United States to strengthen the terrorism sanctions on Iran and to do whatever is necessary to demonstrate to the Iranian government that the U.S. means business when it comes to putting a halt to state-sponsored terrorism."

For the past 102 years, the National Council of Young Israel has ably served the broader Jewish community. With more than 25,000 member families and nearly 200 branch synagogues throughout the United States, Canada, and Israel, the National Council of Young Israel is a multi-faceted organization that embraces Jewish communal needs and often takes a leading role in tackling the important issues that face the Jewish community in North America and Israel.

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