

RELEASE IN PART B6

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**From:** H

**Sent:** 1/23/2010 1:21:50 PM +00:00

**To:** Oscar Flores <[redacted]>

**Subject:** Fw: trip report

B6

Pls print.

----- Original Message -----

**From:** newmyer [redacted] <newmyer [redacted]>  
**To:** H  
**Sent:** Sat Jan 23 08:12:45 2010  
**Subject:** trip report

Dear Secretary Clinton,

Last night I returned from a work trip to India and Israel. Please find below a 2.5 page trip report based on my interactions with officials, foreign service officers, and defense people in both places.

[redacted] and look forward to seeing you, Jackie

MEMORANDUM

Re: Trip report

Date: 23 Jan. 2010

Separately planned trips to India and Israel over the past two weeks turned out to have unexpected synergy. Israelis expressed concern about Pakistani activities in connection with Saudi Arabia, and Indians stated their concern with the increasing polarization of the Middle East along Sunni-Shia lines as a result of recent developments. Interlocutors in both countries highlighted the importance of partnerships with the United States and emphasized the need for the United States to use military force successfully. In the case of India, the focus was on Afghanistan. For Israel, Iran was the focus.

Stepping back from the trip report below, your speech on Internet freedom identified one of the key levers that the United States is already using to offset the anti-liberal character of the governments in Tehran and Beijing. From a "competitive strategies" (to use Mr. Marshall's term) perspective, the policy initiative announced in your speech is brilliant because it draws on the natural American proclivity to innovate while exposing a clear weakness of illiberal political systems. The cost for such regimes of countering new means of spreading information greatly exceeds the level of effort exerted by US companies or individuals to develop these innovations. Conversations with Iran experts associated with the Israeli military suggested that from the Iranian regime's point of view, the greatest threat may lie not with the political protests but rather with the soft but irresistible force of Western culture, of which access to information is clearly a central part.

## India

Several Indian ambassadors and intelligence officers – both retired and active duty – pointed out that for India the most significant consequence of Iran's nuclear program was the all but certain intensification of security cooperation between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. Specifically, they warned about the transfer of nuclear-related items from the latter to the former.

Indian strategic thinkers further assessed that because of Iran's progress on the nuclear front and growing influence in Iraq, the level of Sunni-Shiite conflict throughout the Middle East has increased. There is a nascent Indian effort to think about how the region will change as this struggle deepens and as external powers – including the United States but also Russia and China – cultivate relations with different Sunni and Shiite actors. (A side note: one senior Indian foreign service member said in an offline chat that Russian diplomats had asked if India would be willing to send farmers to the Russian Far East out of a concern to counterbalance the influx of Chinese migrants there. The reply was that the Indian government is not that kind of regime!)

The Indians also stressed that for them, it is imperative that the United States stay the course and prevail in Afghanistan because they are convinced that an American defeat would lead to the further radicalization of Pakistan. While the Indians understood our position vis-à-vis Iran, they suggested that an American policy of tolerating expanded India-Iran ties might provide the United States with additional instruments for exerting influence within Iran.

The Indians were emphatic that they do not want a military confrontation with China. Accordingly, they were very worried by the recent escalation of Chinese anti-Indian rhetoric – i.e., references to the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh as “South Tibet” – and by the build-up of Chinese PLA forces opposite northeast India.

The Indians stated that they value low-key cooperation with the United States, for example, in the form of humanitarian and search-and-rescue exercises at sea. They view these exercises as complementary to their activities with Japan, Australia, and other regional states that expand India’s network of potential security partners. The deployment of US maritime patrol P-3s in the Seychelles was cited by them as having had a major strategic impact by signaling US interest and presence in the Indian Ocean. When asked about how to improve US-India ties, the Indians suggested more than anything else the transfer of dual-use technologies.

#### Action Item

The most immediate way to shift Indian perceptions of the United States in the desired direction is to take tangible steps to streamline the review process for the export of dual-use technology to India.

#### Israel

In a private meeting with the Deputy Prime Minister (DPM), he displayed unusual stress and agitation. He emphasized that the United States should appreciate the way that continued progress by Iran in the area of nuclear weapons is perceived in the

region and beyond as a sign of the decline of American power. Given the American commitment to nonproliferation, and the particular commitment to stopping the Iranians, Tehran's success is seen as an American defeat. This has consequences for the US's ability to work with Middle Eastern states to moderate their behavior and to counter the influence of other "great powers" with interests in the region. In addition, he repeatedly mentioned the possibility that US decision-makers may be confronted with the need to respond to a communication that Israel was about to take action against Iran. He asked that we consider now what our response would be because there would not be time to reflect when the Israelis actually contacted us. Compared to a meeting with him in August, he appeared now to be signaling more the need for near-term effective action and US-Israeli cooperation than the need for analysis. In his words, one red line has already been breached because Iran already has enough fissile material for a couple bombs.

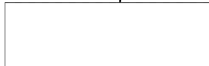
Separately, interactions with Israeli national security planners indicated that Israelis are exploring widely varying alternative courses of action. One senior planner said that they were thinking about how to mitigate the consequences of a nuclear Iran over the long term (10-15 years), while the DPM asserted that dealing with the consequences of a nuclear Iran would be far more complicated than preventing Iran from acquiring weapons in the first place. Still others are exploring possible Iranian responses to circumstances in which they are under high and increasing levels of stress. My assessment is that while the Israelis were certainly trying to encourage the United States to adopt the line of action most favorable to Israel, there has been a real increase in the general Israeli sense of urgency. At the same time, it does not appear that the Israelis have reached a decision about what to do beyond what is already being done.

#### Action Item

Whatever the administration's view of the appropriate policy toward Iran by Israel, it should consider how the United States would react to a three am phone call from Tel Aviv.

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**Message Headers:**

From: H <HDR22@clintonemail.com>  
To: Oscar Flores <[REDACTED]>  
Date: Sat, 23 Jan 2010 08:21:50 -0500  
Subject: Fw: trip report

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