



Spring—perhaps the most beautiful and hopeful season in D.C.—has arrived with progress toward a peaceful resolution to Iran’s nuclear weapons ambitions. As we go to press, a framework agreement between Iran, the U.S. and its negotiating partners has just been reached. Council and Center staff, board members, members and supporters have been intensely focused on supporting these diplomatic efforts. In this exclusive update, you can read more about that effort and our other work to advance our national security and foreign policy priorities so far this year.

Our staff and board experts have been featured on *MSNBC*, quoted in *The Washington Post*, and published on *CNN*. We’ve lobbied, held briefings on Capitol Hill,

published analysis, written op-eds and blogs, and created several info-graphics shared widely with our supporters, Congress and the Administration. Our experts, including Center Board Chair Lt. General Robert Gard, Council Board Member Jim Walsh, Center Board Member Ed Levine, Center Board Member Phil Coyle, and Center Board Member Col. Richard Klass, have been both center stage and behind the scenes with insightful analysis.

In addition, our coalition of organizations has inspired more than two million (and counting!) actions in support of diplomacy with Iran. It’s been a long time since our base has been so engaged!

In addition to our extensive work on Iran, we’ve worked closely with Congress to oppose Pentagon budget gimmicks and support

smart savings on nuclear weapons and other national security spending. And, please read more inside about how things are already shaping up for progressive foreign policy candidates in the 2016 Elections.

At the Council and Center, we’ve been thinking a lot about how to provide you, our dedicated members and supporters, with more opportunities to be involved with our work. This new quarterly newsletter is part of that effort. Also this spring, we will be re-launching our websites with a fresher look and features with all of the familiar valuable information and analysis of national security, foreign policy, and politics. We also are planning more briefings and events to connect you with our campaigns for a more peaceful and secure future. We hope you will stay engaged with us every step of the way—and will share these opportunities with your friends, family, and colleagues.

Thank you for your support, and for all that you do. ■



Diplomacy Breakthrough

Framework Agreement Reached in Iran Talks



On April 2, after marathon negotiations, diplomats from the P5+1 countries and Iran announced the framework for a final

deal to prevent a nuclear-armed Iran. They continue to hammer out the details to produce a final deal by the June 30 deadline.

This framework agreement has convinced some of the toughest critics of diplomacy to praise the deal on its merits. It will place strict, verifiable constraints on Iran’s nuclear program and ensure Iran does not have the opportunity to build a nuclear weapon. Without it, Iran would be free to move forward with 20,000 centrifuges and the ability to build a bomb in a

matter of months. The longer timeline and the most intrusive inspections regime ever negotiated will leave the U.S. and its international partners with the time and ability to detect and react to any violation of Iran’s commitments.

This historic breakthrough is a true testament to the power of diplomacy. Of course, there is more work to be done, and we must prevent Congress from derauling the deal. But we are closer to a peaceful resolution with Iran than we have ever been. ■

2016 Elections & Foreign Policy

It is hard to believe that only a few months after the 2014 elections, the 2016 elections are already heating up. Senate races are shaping up early, while House contests are a bit slower to jell.

Three Senators have already announced they will not run for re-election in 2016.

In California, Senator Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.) announced her

retirement after serving since 1993. State Democratic Attorney General Kamala Harris is the major declared candidate thus far, but others are expected to enter the contest. Democrats are confident they can hold the seat.

In Maryland, stalwart Barbara Mikulski (D) also announced she will not run again after five terms. In 1986, she became the first Democratic woman Senator elected in her own right. At this point, two progressive Democrats are running, Reps. Donna Edwards and Chris Van Hollen. Other candidates are likely to get into the race.

One Republican, Indiana's Dan Coats, has also indicated he will not run for re-election. The state tends Republican, but Democrats may have a chance to capture the seat.

Senators who were previously defeated are expected to try to re-

turn to the upper body in 2016. In Pennsylvania, Council-endorsed former Rep. Joe Sestak is running again against Senator Pat Toomey (R), who won a close contest in 2010. In Wisconsin, former Senator Russ Feingold (D-Wis.) may run against the man who defeated him in 2010, Senator Ron Johnson (R), who is considered one of the most vulnerable Senators up for election in 2016.

Democrats also have found several strong candidates to run for Republican seats, especially in Ohio, Missouri, and Florida.

The 2014 elections were a devastating blow. In 2016, with a high turnout typical of many presidential elections, and many Republican seats up for grabs, there may very well be a reversal of fortune that bodes well for progressive national security and foreign policy in Congress. ■

Nuclear Security & Non-Proliferation

How Our Work Informs Congress

Given the United States' precarious relationship with Russia, it is more important than ever that we encourage cooperation on arms control and non-proliferation.

After President Obama's previous commitments to increasing nuclear security, we were disappointed that his budget request for these programs for FY 2016, while slightly higher than what was appropriated for FY 2015, was significantly down from just a few years ago. Nevertheless, there are some in Congress who continue to fight to preserve programs that prevent nuclear material from getting into the hands of terrorists. One of the ways

we fulfill our mission of increasing peace and security and reducing the threat of nuclear weapons, is by sharing our research and analysis with members of Congress.

The President's budget request restructured the subprograms that comprise U.S. non-proliferation and nuclear security efforts. For our part, Center staff created two fact-sheets on the President's 2016 request: one juxtaposing the FY16 request with funding from previous years, and one demystifying the new program structure.

Analysis like this, and other research and resources produced by Center staff, are regularly sent to key Congressional offices to inform policy making. We learned that not only was this analysis on nuclear security useful to appropriators, but was also shared to help inform their official research arm, the Congressional Research Service.



In addition to several Democratic champions, we have also been working in collaboration with Representative Fortenberry (R-Neb.), co-founder of the Nuclear Security Working Group, a caucus designed to educate members of Congress on these critical issues. Securing loose nuclear material, and preventing the spread of nuclear weapons, is not a partisan issue. We hope to continue to grow interest and awareness on both sides of the aisle. ■

Budgeting for A Better World

The Obama Administration presented a \$612 billion Fiscal Year 2016 Pentagon budget request to Congress on February 2, including \$534 for the base Pentagon budget and \$51 billion for Overseas Contingency Operations. The request is \$38 billion over the Budget Control Act Pentagon budget cap. President Obama has threatened to veto any budget legislation that does not undo all of the Budget Control Act caps, setting up a hotly contentious debate in and with Congress.

On March 25, the House adopted the Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Resolution by a vote of 228-199. Seventeen Republicans joined all 182 Democrats in opposition. On March 27, the Senate approved the Budget Resolution by a 52-46 vote with all Democrats against and all Republicans for, except for Senators Rand Paul (R-KY.) and Ted Cruz (R-Texas).

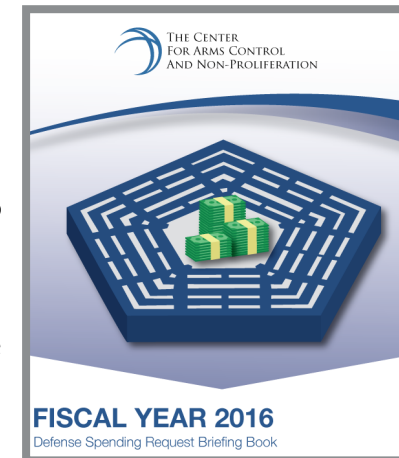
The key vote, adopted 219-208, added \$20 billion more to the Pentagon budget. Lawmakers

worked through the Easter recess to resolve divisions between the House and Senate versions of the bill, both of which provide around \$90 billion for Overseas Contingency Operations, a gimmick that will allow the Pentagon to evade the budget caps.

The Center has been hard at work providing analysis of the ongoing budget process to Congress and to the public and opposing the budget resolutions. On February 6,

the Center released our Fiscal Year 2016 Defense Budget Briefing Book complete with recommendations for savings in areas such as nuclear weapons and the OCO account. That day, we sponsored House and Senate national security budget briefings with partners from across the ideolog-

ical spectrum. The briefings were well attended, and we continue to grow bipartisan interest in proposals for sensible savings. The good news is that there continues to be a dramatic divide between the fiscal hawks and defense hawks. Over the next few months we'll be building on bipartisan alliances to amend the authorization and appropriations bills to reduce ineffective and unsustainable Pentagon and nuclear spending plans. ■



5 Myths Debunked

Disarming Nuclear Weapons Myths

Earlier this year, Center experts collaborated to address some common misconceptions about nuclear weapons, publishing an article in *The National Interest* titled: "5 Myths about America's Nuclear Weapons Debunked."

Myth 1: Nuclear weapons are the highest priority U.S. military force.

Fact: Nuclear weapons play a limited role in national security and fail to address the major security concerns of the future like terrorism, cyber-attacks and climate change.

Myth 2: The threat of a nuclear attack on U.S. soil is as great as or greater than it was during the Cold War.

Fact: An all-out nuclear Armageddon is a very unlikely scenario; nuclear terrorism and accidental nuclear launches pose a far more real threat to security.

Myth 3: Nuclear weapons don't cost very much.

Fact: Estimates suggest the U.S. could spend up to \$1 trillion over the next 30 years by trying to concurrently update the entire nuclear arsenal. This plan is unsustainable and unaffordable.

Myth 4: Nuclear Weapons are safe and secure, and accidents are rare.

Fact: U.S. history is filled with examples of nuclear mishaps, including the dropping of two nuclear weapons on North Carolina and the accidental detonation of a nuclear missile in its silo.

Myth 5: Money can fix the problems with our nuclear arsenals.

Fact: The problems surrounding our nuclear arsenal are endemic. Spending more money will not fix the major issues associated with the outdated structure of our current nuclear force. ■

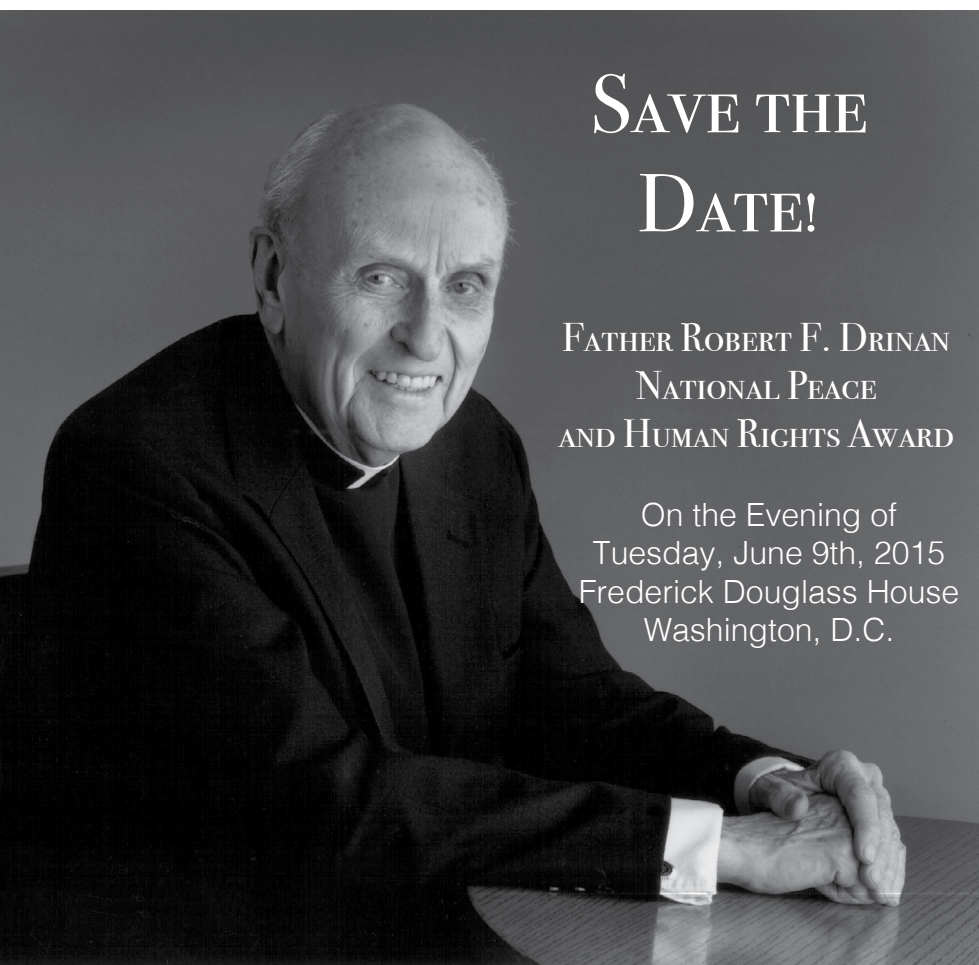
Iran Diplomacy By the Numbers

2 million Grassroots Coalition Actions **500+** Tweets

28 Press Hits **22** Communications with Congress

20 E-Appeals **21** Blog Posts **16** Infographics

11 Published Analyses **6** Briefings **5** Press Releases



SAVE THE DATE!

FATHER ROBERT F. DRINAN
NATIONAL PEACE
AND HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD

On the Evening of
Tuesday, June 9th, 2015
Frederick Douglass House
Washington, D.C.

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of Council for a Livable World!

By becoming a member, your **annual donation of \$25** or more will help us remain one of the most trusted and credible voices on Capitol Hill when it comes to reducing the threat of nuclear weapons, calling out wasteful spending at the Pentagon, and supporting diplomacy.

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