

NPT
Iran

Note to Mr. Duarte

(Request for guidance with respect to the 17-18 April Conference on International Disarmament and Non-proliferation convened by the Islamic Republic of Iran)

With reference to your note dated on 18 February 2010, I believe that ODA is in the best position to determine whether it is appropriate to have representation at the above-referenced Conference, and if so at which level. That said, please find below my comments.

There is no clear understanding about the objectives and organizational aspects of the Iranian conference. There are some concerns about what the conference could achieve especially at a time when the 2010 NPT Review Conference is just a few weeks away. The U.S. Government had advised recently that the Secretary-General not send senior-level officials to the conference. The Secretary-General noted that he has been aware of the Iranian conference and considered sending a working-level officer as an observer to the meeting. I understand from the consultations between your office and the Political Unit in EOSG that you do not believe it appropriate to have high-level representation of the Organization at the conference. I agree with your observation.

As regards the invitation of Mr. Thomas Markram to address the conference in his capacity as the Secretary-General-designate of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, I would advise you to exercise caution on his participation. The subject issues suggested by Iran seem to be heavily focused on nuclear disarmament. As you know, the Secretary-General has repeatedly stressed the importance of addressing the three pillars of the NPT in a balanced manner. Given the need to keep his neutrality and objectivity, delivering remarks at the Iranian conference would, we feel, be controversial. In addition, given the approach of the NPT Review Conference and busy schedule of ODA during the weeks before the Conference, it seems advisable that Mr. Markram spend more time in preparations for the NPT Review Conference.

Having said that, you may wish to check on the plan of the other international Organizations, including the IAEA, about their participation in order to determine whether it is appropriate to send a junior-level officer as an observer (with no role of delivering remarks on behalf of the Organization) as discussed above.


Vijay Nambiar
15 March 2010

cc: Mr. Kim
10-01750

