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**Subj** Conference Call material  
**Date** Sun, 17 Jun 2001 5:15:22 PM Eastern Daylight Time  
**From** "Trita Parsi" <trita@iic.org>  
**To:** "Sussan Tahmasebi" <sussan3@hotmail.com>,  
 <enginuitysearch@worldnet.att.net>, <ae@doc.ic.ac.uk>,  
 <taslimi@mindspring.com>, <olinertax@aol.com>,  
 <payman@sina.jpl.nasa.gov>  
**CC:** <Sussan3@hotmail.com>

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Dear Friends:

Below you will find some points that I wish to raise during our telephone conversation. Some of these points have already been raised in previous correspondence, others have not.

If possible, please review these before the conference call. I will try to be as concise as possible.

#### 1. Lift sanctions or grant exemption for non-profits?

One key decision that needs to be made is whether we conduct a lobbying effort aimed at lifting sanctions altogether or simply lobby for an exemption for non-profits.

It is important to keep the following in mind:

The main purpose of the sanctions are not to halt Iran's alleged attempts to acquire WMD or halt its alleged support to terrorist groups. The main purpose is to constitute a political obstacle to a US-Iran dialogue and improved US-Iran relations. From the Israeli perspective (the sole force behind the lobby efforts to impose and now extend the sanctions), *every step Washington takes towards Tehran is a step away from Tei Aviv.*

As such, AIPAC (the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee) could very well accept an exemption for non-profits as it would serve two purposes for them:

1. Just as with the partial of lifting of sanctions by Albright in 2000, they can point to the exemption for non-profits and claim that it is a great concession from the US side that Iran has failed or will fail to reciprocate. Thus, they can argue the sanctions, as a whole, should be kept in place since Iran deserves no further goodwill gestures. (This has been AIPAC's main argument during their campaign to extend the sanctions—Iran does not deserve a lifting of sanctions as she has failed to reciprocate Albright's goodwill gesture). Keep in mind that Iran will most likely not reciprocate

- any US moves short of a total lifting of sanctions.
2. As with the sanctions on Iraq, humanitarian exemptions tend to make it more difficult to end the sanctions policy itself. Just as with the oil-for-food program in regards to Iraq, proponents of sanctions can argue that because of the humanitarian exemptions, sanctions only hurt the decision makers and not average people. We may wish to avoid making the US's sanctions policy on Iran "smarter" as such a move will most likely prolong the sanctions policy.

Currently, it is not clear whether ILSA will be extended for 2 or 5 years. If the former, it will perhaps be wiser to organize a lobbying effort to lift the sanctions altogether, using the NGO argument to point out the flaws of the policy as whole. If the latter, perhaps an exemption will be more likely to succeed.

## 2. 501 C3 or not?

I have very limited knowledge on this subject, but my understanding is that:

1. 501 C3 may only use 10% of their resources for direct lobbying.
2. Getting a 501 C3 is a lengthy and arduous process.
3. The easiest way to lobby is by not seeking any status at all: A simple incorporation can lobby using its first amendment right. By not having any tax-exempt status, we will be free to use our resources freely.

Perhaps Mr. Oliner can shed light on this issue and advise us whether we should seek to form a new 501 C3, an incorporation or perhaps a third alternative.

## 3. Extent of cooperation with other groups

Our humanitarian approach to the sanctions issue is probably our greatest strength. Groups such as ITA and AIC have in a sense lost some of their credibility by having other, less altruistic motives. ITA ultimately seeks to profit through consulting between US and Iranian companies once the sanctions are lifted, AIC is often accused of being too close to the Iranian regime. Personally, I disagree with the above, I just wish to show how these groups can be discredited in a way that charitable non-profits usually cannot.

I suggest that we investigate and discuss the pro's and con's of working closely with other groups. (Please keep in mind that I am currently an employee of AIC).

## 4. When to go public?

The most efficient lobbying is done behind the scenes. AIPAC surprised everyone in March when Chairman Hyde announced that Lantos and he would push for a 5-year extension of ILSA. AIPAC realized that the new Administration would fight them on this, that Bush would be preoccupied with many other issues during his first months in office and that the opponents of the sanctions were gearing up for a fight on the Hill to take place in May or June at earliest. So already in late January, they launched a big "behind-the-scenes" campaign on the Hill and solicited support for an extension. They did not go public until March, when 80% of the groundwork already had been done. (Of course, they can only launch such "behind-the-scenes" campaigns when there are no competing lobby groups that monitor their activities...)

I believe we should study their tactics and perhaps avoid any media coverage and op:eds until we

have fully assessed and mobilized our resources and completed a large portion of the groundwork on the Hill.

#### 5. Importance of doing the groundwork in Congress

As mentioned before, failed attempts by Iranian Americans to live up to their promises to lobby on the Hill has caused our allies in Congress to be wary about working closely with Iranian American groups, although they do emphasize the importance of the Iranian-American community to participate in the efforts to lift sanctions.

In order to be successful, we must have the resources to meet with all offices on the Hill (app. 535). We should be careful about giving the impression of being able to successfully carry through with our mission until we have gathered the necessary sources. And we should perhaps not initiate any contacts with allies on the Hill before having mobilized a respectful amount of resources and laid a strong foundation for our activities.

My apologies for this lengthy document and its late submission. I hope it will still be useful for the conference call.

Regards,  
Trita Parsi

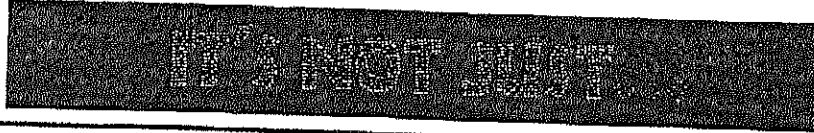
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 To: "Sussan Tahmasebi" <sussan3@hotmail.com>, <engineuitysearch@worldnet.att.net>, <ae@doc.ic.ac.uk>, <taslimi@mindspring.com>, <olinertax@aol.com>, <payman@sina.jpl.nasa.gov>  
 Cc: <Sussan3@hotmail.com>  
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Subj Re: Conference Call minutes  
 Date Sat, 23 Jun 2001 10:56:17 PM Eastern Daylight Time  
 From "Trita Parsi" <trita@ic.org>  
 To: "Abbas Edalat" <ae@doc.ic.ac.uk>  
 CC: "Sussan Tahmasebi" <sussan3@hotmail.com>,  
 <enginuitysearch@worldnet.att.net>, <taslimi@mindspring.com>,  
 <olinertax@aol.com>, <payman@sina.jpl.nasa.gov>

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Dear All:

I think Prof. Edalat is right on point. Combining the two goals will also enable us to work with allies both within and outside Congress who perhaps would oppose an effort to just get the NGO exemption, as such a move might make the lifting of the sanctions altogether more difficult.

There has been silence since the draft minutes of last week's telephone conference was sent to the group for your review and approval. I assume everyone has been busy, but it would be good if we could finish the minutes by Tuesday so that we can follow Mr. Bagher Namazi's instructions and send it to Amb. Bill Miller.

As I mentioned last time, please make whatever changes to the minutes you see fit.

Regards,  
Trita Parsi

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

From: "Abbas Edalat" <ae@doc.ic.ac.uk>  
 To: "Trita Parsi" <trita@ic.org>  
 Cc: "Sussan Tahmasebi" <sussan3@hotmail.com>;  
 <enginuitysearch@worldnet.att.net>; <taslimi@mindspring.com>;  
 <olinertax@aol.com>; <payman@sina.jpl.nasa.gov>  
 Sent: Thursday, June 21, 2001 7:26 AM  
 Subject: Re: Conference Call minutes

&gt; Dear all,

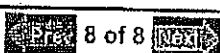
&gt;

> I believe we should not counterpose campaigning against sanctions and  
> campaigning to get exemption for NGO's. After all in politics we can

> have both maximal as well as partial demands, without a contradiction.  
 >  
 > We should call for removing all sanctions but ask for the IMMEDIATE  
 > exemption of NGO's from the restrictions. The two can be done and  
 > should be done together. The first will be the ultimate aim which we  
 > should always promote but the second should be somehow our immediate  
 > demand which can today mobilize MORE people, organisations and  
 > politicians. If we campaign on both issues then the realization of the  
 > second (NGO exemption) will PAVE the road for campaigning more  
 > effectively on the first (removing all sanctions); it will be the  
 > logical next step not just for us but for all those whom we have  
 > persuaded to join us in getting the NGO exemption. With a victory on a  
 > partial demand which is easier to achieve we prepare the ground for a  
 > achieving a bigger victory later.  
 >  
 > I am not really familiar with US politics to comment on how we should  
 > proceed, but I am sure there is a way to combine both demands (with  
 > somehow different tones).  
 >  
 > best,  
 > Abbas  
 > --  
 > Abbas Edalat, Professor of Computer Science and Mathematics  
 > Department of Computing, Imperial College, London SW7 2BZ, UK  
 > Tel +44 (0)20 7594 8245 Fax +44 (0)20 7594 8201  
 > http://www.doc.ic.ac.uk/~ae http://www.science-arts.org  
 >

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 To: "Abbas Edalat" <ae@doc.ic.ac.uk>  
 Cc: "Sussan Tahmasebi" <sussan3@hotmail.com>,  
 <engenuitysearch@worldnet.att.net>, <taslimi@mindspring.com>,  
 <colinertax@aol.com>, <payman@sina.jpl.nasa.gov>  
 References: <F2650jIL2jpwkfb81If00002964@hotmail.com>  
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Subj: Re: Conference Call minutes

Date: Mon, 25 Jun 2001 12:52:29 AM Eastern Daylight Time

From: "Trita Parsi" &lt;trita@iic.org&gt;

To: "Fereydoun Taslimi" &lt;taslimi@mindspring.com&gt;, "Sussan Tahmasebi" &lt;sussan3@hotmail.com&gt;, &lt;enginuitysearch@worldnet.att.net&gt;, &lt;ae@doc.ic.ac.uk&gt;, &lt;olinertax@aol.com&gt;, &lt;payman@sina.jpl.nasa.gov&gt;

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Dear Fereydoun:

Sorry for not calling you today, i will try tomorrow. Sussan and Brian, i will try to call you tomorrow as well.

Re your points:

1. Your point on giving NGO exemption priority is well taken. In the minutes, it currently states that a majority favors that but that we also saw the need for more research. That was my understanding of our meeting, please correct me if I am mistaken.
2. Although true, I do not think that the argument that this is a concession to American citizens will get us very far. Nonetheless, next week I am meeting with Ken Katzman and I will ask him on his opinion on this as well.
3. I will add text regarding the wish to keep things loose without an official organization, my apologies for forgetting to emphasize that more. (Personally, I must say that I have great doubts that we will be able to get anywhere unless we make things official. Few Congressmen will support a 1-3 loosely organized charitable organizations that are not even allowed to lobby in the first place. A shield organization with no financial or legal links to the charitable organizations will protect the latter from being accused of using its resources for lobbying. The minutes state that we reached no decision.
4. I will also add the part about contacting other organizations. Thanks for reminding me.

Most points in the minutes do state that we did NOT take any decisions and that we recognized the need for more research in almost all the fields. The sooner we can conclude and approve the minutes, the sooner we will be able to brief our potential collaborators and advisors on where we have reached so far.

Also, I have come in contact with a MD in NJ who is trying to lobby for a change. He has gathered money for building a girl school in Iran but cannot conclude it due to the sanctions. I will send his info to you soon.

 Regards,  
 Trita Parsi



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Subj Meeting  
 Date Mon, 16 Jul 2001 10:18:30 AM Eastern Daylight  
 From "Trita Parsi" <trita@iic.org>  
 To: <olinertax@aol.com>

Includ original t in Repl

Hi Brian:  
  
 Hope you are doing well. I will be in DC on Tuesday and Wednesday this week, and wanted to see if you have time to meet briefly during the afternoon on=20= either Tuesday or Wednesday. You can call me at 609 252 9956.  
  
 Regards,  
 Trita Parsi



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