

Congressman Bill Foster (IL-11)

State and Foreign Ops Appropriations Testimony

March 17, 2017

- Good morning, and thank you Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Lowey for holding this Members' Day and to the members of the Subcommittee for allowing me to testify here today.
- I am here this morning for two reasons:
 - To urge robust funding for the accounts that support the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the organization tasked with verifying that states comply with their commitments under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and other nuclear non-proliferation agreements and;
 - to urge support for the Synchrotron-light for Experimental Science and Application in the Middle East (SESAME) facility.
- Earlier last year, world leaders from more than 50 countries convened in Washington, D.C. and participated in a global dialogue to reinforce our commitment at the highest levels to securing nuclear materials.
- In support of that initiative, the Nuclear Security Summit released an Action Plan highlighting the IAEA's need for "reliable and sufficient resources."
- As you know, each member state of the IAEA is assessed annual contributions for the IAEA's Regular Budget.
- This budget covers the salaries of Agency personnel, operating costs, and some of its work in the areas of safeguards, nuclear safety and security, and peaceful uses of nuclear technologies.

- However, the Regular Budget is woefully inadequate to cover all the costs incurred by the Agency's critical work.
- With nuclear threats drawing increased global attention, member states are expecting more from the IAEA.
- This is for several reasons –
- First - there are an increasing number of nuclear facilities and amount of nuclear material around the world to safeguard.
- January 16, 2017, marked the one-year anniversary of the Iran nuclear deal's implementation.
- A critical part of the inspection regimen, IAEA inspectors have enhanced access to all declared Iranian nuclear sites, including uranium mines and mills, and continuous real-time surveillance of centrifuge manufacturing and storage locations.
- Our ability to monitor and detect illicit nuclear activities, including illicit trafficking, is largely based upon the will and support of the international community.
- Currently, 126 states party to the NPT have Additional Protocols in force that grant the organization expanded authority to verify their commitment not to produce or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons.
- As a result, international inspectors are able to obtain a broader picture of such states' nuclear programs, plans, and nuclear material holdings and trade, which helps to provide assurances regarding the absence of non-peaceful nuclear activities.
- Second - since Fukushima, the Agency has expanded its work on nuclear safety.
- The IAEA Department of Nuclear Safety helps countries to upgrade nuclear safety and to prepare for and respond to emergencies.

- And third – since September 11, 2001, the Agency has increased its work to combat nuclear terrorism, including setting up a Nuclear Security Fund, which is largely funded by voluntary contributions from member states.
- Virtually all the Agency’s technical assistance programs and projects are funded outside the regular budget.
- As a result, the Agency relies heavily on member states’ voluntary, or extra-budgetary, contributions.
- In fact, much of what the Agency does is in direct support of U.S. nonproliferation or nuclear security objectives and initiatives.
- And we can specify how our voluntary contribution is to be spent, thus ensuring that it goes to support our priority objectives.
- For example, we currently use the voluntary contribution to fund projects of specific U.S. interest in the safeguards and nuclear security programs.
- Through the IAEA Peaceful Uses Initiative, our voluntary contributions promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in both power generation and other applications that include food security, water, cancer treatment, disease prevention, climate, and the oceans.
- The IAEA, for example, played a helpful role in the recent Ebola and Zika crises that used nuclear technology enabled faster detection of both viruses and quicker treatment. As IAEA Director General says: “Our work literally saves lives.”
- Many meritorious nuclear security and technical assistance projects in Member States go unfunded because the IAEA lacks the resources.

- In the past, the United States has provided extra-budgetary contributions to the IAEA to maintain or enhance the ability of the Agency to carry out its mission.
- Although funding for the IAEA is a shared cost among all member states, we, as Members of Congress, have a responsibility to ensure that the Agency is set up for success – not failure
- By continuing to ensure that the IAEA has the funding necessary to fulfill its growing responsibilities, we will be one step closer to achieving our ambitious goals of preventing, detecting, and responding to nuclear terrorism around the world.
- I would also like to draw your attention to an important opportunity to advance U.S. diplomatic goals in the Middle East through scientific engagement.
- SESAME is a major science facility under construction in Jordan that aims to both:
 - Promote scientific excellence in the Middle East and surrounding regions, and
 - Build scientific links that foster better understanding and a culture of peace through collaboration.
- U.S. support for SESAME would provide encouragement to all those who are struggling to collaborate across political, religious and cultural divides throughout the world.
- At this turbulent time in the Middle East, rapid action in support of SESAME would be enormously valuable in ensuring its success, and furthering the diplomatic interests of the United States.
- Thank you again, and I yield back the balance of my time.