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Opening Statement of the Honorable **Ed Royce (R-CA), Chairman**  
House Foreign Affairs Committee Hearing:  
“Iran on Notice”  
February 16, 2017

(As prepared for delivery)

This morning we consider options available to the new Administration as it contends with an emboldened Iran.

As one witness will tell the Committee, we should start from the premise that Iran “*gets no special pass*” on its dangerous and provocative acts. Unfortunately – despite its promises to this Committee - that’s not how the previous administration handled Tehran. Terrorism and missile activities that should have been designated *weren’t*. Just one individual was sanctioned for human rights abuses after negotiations began. *One!* After the deal was inked, the former Secretary of State traveled the world enthusiastically touting that Iran was “open for business.”

Indeed, the administration went out of its way *not* to offend Tehran. In December, when this Committee pressed the extension of the *Iran Sanctions Act*, President Obama took the very unusual step of letting this legislation become law *without* his signature.

So it’s not surprising that Tehran believes it’s in a “post-sanctions environment.” But as long as Iran is firing missiles, fueling terror and shouting “Death to America!” nothing can be normal.

Sanctions can be imposed even while adhering to and strictly enforcing the nuclear agreement – as flawed as it is. Remember, even under the Obama Administration’s reading, the Administration has the ability to press back on Iran’s support for terrorism, human rights abuses and missile development: “None of these sanctions were relieved under the [nuclear agreement.]”

Iran’s continuing intercontinental ballistic missile program – whose only purpose is to carry a nuclear warhead, must be front and center. This month’s designations are a good start. But more can be done to find and target the banks and companies that are supplying this dangerous program aimed at *us*. It also means more extraditions, prosecutions, and indictments of sanctions violators. This proactive approach also means stepping up our defenses and those of our regional partners.

Second, the Administration shouldn’t be shy about tackling Iran’s terror arm, the *Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps*. Since the Guard has been labelled Iran’s “*most powerful economic actor*” by the U.S. Treasury Department, there are plenty of options. Indeed, there are hundreds

of IRGC affiliates that are *yet* to be sanctioned – what one observer calls a “Revolutionary Guards Gap.” These are the front companies funding missiles marked “Israel must be wiped off the face of the earth.”

These terror outfits need to be sanctioned and the new Administration should look at ways in which companies closely linked to the IRGC – but not fully owned by them – could be sanctioned. The threat of secondary sanctions against those around the world dealing with the outfit funding terror worldwide must also be real – it *wasn't* under the previous Administration.

Around the region, the Administration can attack Iran’s proxy Hezbollah thanks to a new law advanced by this Committee. And increased interdiction of Iranian arms shipments to the revolutionary Houthis in Yemen, clearer rules of engagement for U.S. forces in the Gulf, and better defense cooperation with our partners on the frontlines of the Iranian threat is all needed.

Of course Iran will howl and threaten at each step of the way. However, the nuclear agreement does *not* leave us defenseless against Tehran’s threatening behavior. Careful coordination with allies is a must. And all along we should be clear that the choice is with Iran to end its threatening, destabilizing behavior.