

**Opening Statement of the Honorable Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL)**  
**Joint Subcommittee Hearing entitled: Breaking the Iran, North Korea, and Syria Nexus**  
**Thursday April 11, 2013**

As we assess the growing threats emanating from Iran, Syria, and North Korea, this timely hearing will examine the options available to confront these regimes.

We know Assad has a chemical weapons stockpile, and we know that it once had a nuclear reactor, built with the assistance of North Korea, until it was destroyed supposedly by an Israeli air strike.

The future of Assad may be uncertain, but what is assured is that we must not allow his chemical weapons to fall into the wrong hands.

Syria's future is a vital U.S. national security interest but those interests are undermined when reports surface that Iran has been sending weapons and fighters to aid Assad in this battle.

Iran's Qods Force and Hezbollah operatives are working to ensure that Assad remains in power, which reiterates our need to take a strong position against the Iranian regime.

The latest round of P5 plus one negotiations failed to put a halt on Iran's nuclear program, as Iran announced several new nuclear related projects.

It's almost as if we refuse to learn from our mistakes.

In North Korea, Pyongyang has written the playbook on how to proceed with a nuclear program while still gaining concessions from the United States.

In 2008, the Bush Administration erred in taking North Korea off the State Sponsor of Terrorism list.

This mistake must be corrected by re-listing North Korea for its December 2012 launch of a long-range rocket followed up with Pyongyang's third successful nuclear detonation this past February.

Since then, Kim Jong-un has ramped up the rhetoric and threatened to:

- pull out of the 1953 Armistice agreement with South Korea;
- destroy U.S. military bases in Japan and Guam; and
- launch nuclear war against the United States, and our ally like South Korea.

The U.S. must demand that Iran, Syria, and North Korea allow IAEA inspectors to immediately inspect and have access to all nuclear facilities and stockpiles to ensure their safety.

If these three rogue regimes, this triangle of proliferation, are allowed to continue on their current paths, it will lead to a global nuclear arms race.

To counter this threat, I have introduced, along with my colleague Congressman Brad Sherman, H.R. 893 – the Iran, North Korea, and Syria Nonproliferation Accountability Act.

This bill expands on Iranian sanctions from last year and makes them applicable to North Korea and Syria, while also enhancing them.

Cutting off the economic lifeline to these regimes is imperative, but we must also counter their efforts to proliferate technology and scientific knowledge to advance their WMD ambitions.

Our bill:

- Prohibits US assistance to any foreign government that provides assistance to Iran, North Korea to Syria; and
- Will increase sanctions on any person or entity transferring goods, services, or technology for the chemical, biological, or advanced conventional weapons program of Iran, North Korea, and Syria;

History has proven that diplomatic negotiations with these regimes have been a waste of time.

The Administration must fully and vigorously enforce sanctions against this triangle of proliferation, and have a coherent and coordinated strategy to counter these threats.

Thank you.