Mohsen Banan

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Date:	November 3, 2010
To:	Seattle University
	Seattle's World Affairs Council
From:	Mohsen BANAN – An Iranian-American
Subject:	Against Israeli Consul Presenting at Seattle University on November 3rd, 2010

I understand that Seattle University and Seattle's World Affairs Council are responsible for having arranged a presentation by the consul general of Israel (San Francisco) at Seattle University at 7:00 pm on November 3rd, 2010

The speaker's topic is: Making Peace in the Middle East, the Iranian Nuclear Crisis and US-Israel Relations.

I am an Iranian-American. In the context of this letter, I am an Iranian addressing you as Americans. I protest your providing a platform for promotion of Israeli war policies. My protest is based on the following two facts:

1. Israel is in the process of gathering support for an attack against Iran. By providing this platform, despite pretenses of peace, you have become a buttress for warmongers.
2. You have taken no measures to provide a platform for presentation of the Iranian counter perspective.

This is all somewhat personal for me. Permit me to introduce myself. My Name is Mohsen Banan. I have lived in Seattle since 1978. I am a graduate of Seattle University. Department of Electrical Engineering. Class of 1982. Magna Cum Laude.

I received my degree from the hands of Fr. Sullivan. Now, such a presentation is to take place in Sullivan Hall. I don't like that. Let me explain.

Prior to the start of America's botched colonial war in Iraq on March 23rd, 2003 many pseudo-academics, pseudo-intellectuals and pseudo-peace-advocates prepared the American public with false information to pave the way towards war.

That is happening again. And you have become part of it by providing a platform for Israeli warmongers.

I fully expect that the Israeli consul general will build and further propagate certain falsehoods that need corrections. For example:

- **President Ahmadinejad has never said: "Israel should be wiped off the map."**

  My mother tongue is Farsi. Literal translation of what he said when he quoted Imam Khomeini is: "the occupation regime over Jerusalem should vanish from the page of time."

The spirit of that statement is more along the lines of ”We Shall Overcome this injustice in Jerusalem”.

If you can’t trust my translation, consider Juan Cole among others.

Ahmadinejad was not making a threat.

The main question is how and why was the American public tricked into thinking that he has said: ”Israel should be wiped off the map.”

The key question for the American public is: Who is demonizing Iran and why?

- **President Ahmadinejad is not a Holocaust denier.**

  The spirit of what he is saying is:

  Holocaust is a purely Western phenomena. Muslims and Jews have lived side by side for more than a 1000 year in the Middle East. Since Christian-Germans are responsible for the Holocaust, why should Muslim-Palestinians pay the price?

  His argument seems perfectly logical to me. He is not denying the Holocaust.

  The key question for the American public is: How were Americans made to think that Ahmadinejad is a Holocaust denier? Who is demonizing Iranians and why?

- **Iran does not intend to develop nuclear weapons.**

  In the Islamic Republic of Iran, there is unanimous consensuses amongst top ranking clergy in Ghom, Najaf, Mashhad and elsewhere that possession, use and threat of use of nuclear weapons is immoral. Many decrees have been issues to that effect.

  The topic of nuclear energy and nuclear weapons has been widely debated in the Iranian society for a decade or more – in the press, amongst the academics, amongst politicians, ...

  When President Ahmadinejad says:
  ”Nuclear Energy for All and Nuclear Weapons for None.”

  He is not just expressing his position. It reflects national consensus. We Iranians want: Nuclear Energy and not Nuclear Weapons.

- **Iran can be trusted with nuclear energy.**

  Of course Iran has a right to nuclear energy. And we have asserted that right repeatedly. And we will again.

  It is a fact that the distance between mastery of nuclear energy and the ability to produce nuclear weapons is little.

  Israel and USA have been saying that Iranians should not be permitted to independently learn how to produce nuclear energy because they can not be trusted not to abuse that knowledge.

  It is at a minimum arrogant and more realistically just sick for Israel and USA to make such an argument.

  Americans are the only people that have used nuclear weapons – against civilian targets, twice. America posses the largest stockpile of nuclear weapons. The short American history is full of wars, aggressions and coups.

  Israel is the only country with nuclear weapons in the Middle East. Israel is a non-signatory to Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Israel’s very short 60 year history is full of wars and aggressions. Israel’s, is a story of occupation.

> It is precisely because of such American/Israeli statements and attitudes that much of the world has come to better recognize the American/Israeli character as that of a morally bankrupt, self absorbed bully. That is where occupation, imperial and colonial attitudes takes you.
>
> The past 200 years of Iranian history includes no aggression, no coups against any nation and no occupation. The Iran-Iraq war was an invasion by Iraq (supported by the US).
>
> Iran has every right to nuclear energy and the question of trust brought by Israelis and Americans is just their bullying strategy.

The only thing that Iran is guilty of is that of not being a neo-colony of United States. Iran is the only country in the Middle East that is outside of American/Israeli subordination. Thus far the price imposed on us for asserting our independence has included sanctions, demonization and threats.

Iranians understand this well and are capable and prepared to defend their independence and freedom. Any sort of military adventure by Israel and/or America against Iran will likely prove very costly for the bully.

In brief, "Don't Mess With Iran", is the message.

Learn from your debacles in Iraq and Afghanistan. You have enough blood on your hands.

I do not expect that any of the above will appear in the presentation that you have arranged.

Given that, the main purpose of this letter is to encourage you to arrange another forum during which the perspectives and positions of Iran can be presented.

Has such a presentation been scheduled? Where and when will it be?

If you do not take measures to provide a platform for presentation of the Iranian counter perspective, then you would be in conflict with peace and the values that Jesuits claim to promote.

In order to preempt the excuse that you could not find anyone to present, consider myself as a presenter.

I have no association with the Iranian government, but I am well aware of Iran's general policies. Much of the Iranian foreign policy is openly debated and reflects general consensus. At a minimum, I could debunk the common falsehoods that the Israeli government and US media propagate.

I look forward to your reply.

Thank you in advance.