United Nations Should Charge Iranian President with Violating the Genocide Convention

For Immediate Release: January 11, 2007

Contact: Kimberly Allen, Rep. Rothman, (202) 226-8364

Eric Elk, Rep. Kirk, (202) 225-4055

Rothman-Kirk Resolution Calls on the United Nations to Charge Iranian President Ahmadinejad with Violating the Genocide Convention

(Washington, DC)—This week, Congressmen Steve Rothman (D-NJ) and Mark Kirk (R-IL) led a bipartisan group of U.S. Representatives in calling on the United Nations (UN) Security Council to charge Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad with violating the 1948 Genocide Convention. Ahmadinejad has repeatedly called for the destruction of Israel and Israelis, ranting that "the Jews are very filthy people" and saying that "Israel must be wiped off of the map."

In Rothman and Kirk's letter urging Members of Congress to support their legislation, H.Con.Res.21, the Congressmen wrote: "As you may know, the 1948 Genocide Convention not only prohibits genocide… but it also prohibits 'direct and public incitement to commit genocide.' It further provides that individuals committing genocidal crimes shall be punished 'whether they are constitutionally responsible rulers, public officials or private individuals.' Ahmadinejad's hateful rhetoric calling for the elimination of Israel, a Member State of the United Nations, qualifies as inciting genocide."

"Further, [Ahmadinejad's] words clearly violate Article 2, Section 4 of the UN Charter," continued Rothman and Kirk. "This provision, which applies to all UN members, including Iran, requires all U.N. members to 'refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state.'"

In commenting on the new legislation, Congressman Rothman said: "The international community must hear President Ahmadinejad's comments as a clear expression of his intended genocide against Israel. No one heeded the danger of Adolf Hitler's hateful calls for the death of an entire population and six million people were killed in the Holocaust."

"In the past, dictators often tell us what crimes they will commit long before they strike. If we learn from that lesson, we will take early action against the Iranian leader who has told us that he hopes to murder many," said Congressman Kirk.

Twenty-one Members of Congress, including Rep. Kirk, have co-sponsored the Rothman-Kirk resolution, which was introduced today. Early supporters of the bill include: Reps. Shelly Berkley (D-NV), Dan Burton (R-IN), Christopher Carney (D-PA), Joseph Crowley (D-NY), Eliot Engel (D-NY), Chaka Fattah (D-PA), Bob Inglis (R-SC), Timothy Johnson (R-IL), Ron Klein (D-FL), John Lewis (D-GA), Donald Manzullo (R-IL), Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY), Michael McCaul (R-TX), Michael McNulty (D-NY), Patrick Murphy (D-PA), Dana Rohrabacher (R-CA), Jim Saxton (R-NJ), Janic Schakowsky (D-IL), Pete Sessions (R-TX), and Edolphus Towns (D-NY).

The Rothman-Kirk resolution would express the sense of the United States Congress that Ahmadinejad is guilty of violating the Genocide Convention and that the United Nations should charge Ahmadinejad with this crime. Rothman and Kirk are hopeful that the House will vote on this resolution soon.

Ahmadinejad's multiple violations of the 1948 Genocide Convention were recently documented by prominent diplomats in a 68-page report titled "Referral of Iranian President Ahmadinejad on the Charge of Incitement to Commit Genocide." The December 2006 report was released by The Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs and authored by Ambassadors Meir Rosenne, Dore Gold, and Eytan Bentsur, and Holocaust survivor and Professor Elie Wisel, among others.

The full text of the Rothman-Kirk Resolution calling on the United Nations Security Council to charge Ahmadinejad with inciting genocide against Israel is available to read online at: http://rothman.house.gov/pdf/hconres21.pdf .

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