

Foreign Affairs Committee

Oral evidence: The Iran-Israel conflict, HC 1081

Tuesday 17 June 2025

Ordered by the House of Commons to be published on 17 June 2025.

[Watch the meeting](#)

Members present: Emily Thornberry (Chair); Alex Ballinger; Dan Carden; Richard Foord; Blair McDougall; Abtisam Mohamed; Edward Morello; Sir John Whittingdale.

Questions 1 - 33

Witness

I: His Excellency Mr Seyed Ali Mousavi, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the United Kingdom.

Examination of witness

Witness: His Excellency Mr Seyed Ali Mousavi.

Q1 Chair: Today at the Foreign Affairs Committee, we are holding a session on the Iran-Israel conflict. Our witness today is His Excellency Seyed Ali Mousavi, who is the ambassador of Iran to the United Kingdom.

Before we start, I would like to make it clear that the invitation to appear at today's session was also extended to the ambassador of Israel to the United Kingdom, Her Excellency Tzipi Hotovely. Unfortunately, the ambassador was not able to attend, but we are very keen to hear the Israeli perspective on this issue, as we have been in our other areas of work, and we are certainly hoping that we will, at some date in the future, be able to organise that. We are looking forward to having another opportunity to hear either from the Israeli ambassador as soon as possible or from other Israeli voices. The Israeli ambassador is always welcome to write to us following this session, or at any other time, if there is anything that they would like to place on record.

Your Excellency, thank you very much for joining us today. May I just explain to viewers what the Foreign Affairs Committee is? We are a representative body of the whole of Parliament. I was elected by the whole of this House of Parliament. We have representation on the Committee from each of the political parties, from the Opposition and from the Government. There are more Government MPs than Opposition ones, but we have a representative group here. We have a Conservative and a couple of Liberal Democrats, and four of us are on the Government side. We are independent of the Foreign Office and of the Government, and our job is to try to make the Foreign Office as good as it can be, just so that people understand that. Thank you very much.

May we also extend our great sympathy to Iranian civilians who are losing their lives at the moment? It must be very stressful to be somebody living in Iran right now.

At this stage, perhaps you have something that you want to say as an initial statement, and then we may have some questions for you, if that works for you, Your Excellency.

Seyed Ali Mousavi: Thank you, Madam Thornberry. Ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon to all. It is a great pleasure for me to be here and to have this meeting. I am honoured as an Iranian ambassador to present this general statement to British Members of Parliament in this Committee.

I wish to make a brief statement on the ongoing terrorist and criminal aggression by the Israeli regime against the Islamic Republic of Iran. Israel has committed a blatant act of aggression against the sovereign and territorial integrity of Iran. Its relentless campaign of atrocity against all people continues unabated. This is a serious violation of the United



HOUSE OF COMMONS

Nations charter and fundamental principles of international law. This attack crossed all red lines.

Most alarmingly, Israel deliberately targeted peaceful nuclear facilities operating under full IAEA safeguards and monitoring. This is a dangerous and illegal act. There is no doubt about it. It posed a serious risk of releasing radioactive material. If Iran had not immediately contained the situation, the consequences could have been catastrophic.

Israel's claim of surgical strikes is false and misleading. In contrast, it has launched a campaign of unlawful and indiscriminate attacks targeting civilian infrastructure in Iran. Civilians were killed. Homes, hospitals and other civilian infrastructure were destroyed. These are facts, not claims.

The Israeli regime deliberately strikes densely populated civilian areas in multiple large Iranian cities where millions live. So far, almost 1,500 people have been killed or injured. At least 224 civilians, including women and children, have been killed. Many of the victims are children. In one brutal attack on a residential building in Tehran, around 20 children were martyred. Due to the severity of the injuries, these numbers may rise.

Israel also targeted vital civilian and economic infrastructure. Water storage, fuel depots and petrochemical facilities, including the Asaluyeh refinery in Bushehr, were hit. Hospitals were also struck. These are not accidents. These are war crimes.

The Israeli regime deliberately targeted the office of the Iranian broadcasting organisation during a live broadcast. This appalling attack constitutes a blatant war crime and a direct assault on press freedom. The Israeli regime has once again demonstrated that it is the foremost enemy of truth. It holds the disgraceful record of being the world's leading perpetrator of violence against journalists and media professionals.

In response to these barbaric attacks and aggression, Iran exercised its inherent and legitimate right to self-defence in line with article 51 of the United Nations charter. Our response was and is defensive, targeted and proportionate. It is solely aimed at deterring and preventing the recurrence of such crimes. Iran will resolutely defend its security and territorial integrity. We focus only on military and economic assets involved in aggression. Iran does not seek war or escalation, but we will not hesitate to defend our people, our territory and our sovereignty. Unlike the Israeli regime, Iran respects international humanitarian law. We did not target civilians.

US forces supported Israeli aggression. Without US weapons, intelligence and political backing, this attack could not have happened. The United States will share responsibility for this unlawful act. This aggression came just as the sixth round of the nuclear negotiation was about to resume in Muscat last Sunday. Iran came to the table in good faith and with new



HOUSE OF COMMONS

proposals aimed at bridging differences. The US, however, responded in bad faith.

This hypocrisy undermines trust and diplomacy. Israel tries to sabotage diplomacy through force. This is a pattern of Israeli behaviour—derail talks, escalate conflicts, and distract from its ongoing crimes, especially the genocide in Gaza. It is now committing genocide in Gaza with hunger and weapons, with different limitations and problems for innocent people.

Let me be clear. Iran has not attacked Israel. Iran has not started any war. The so-called existential threat narrative is false. It has no legal basis. Also, the Israeli invocation of pre-emptive self-defence illegally and dangerously erodes the foundation of the prohibition of the use of force in international relations. It is used only to justify aggression and hide Israel's war crimes. Iran warns that any country assisting Israeli aggression will share legal responsibility for the consequences.

Last Friday, Iran called for an urgent Security Council meeting, and our request is simple. The council must act now according to the United Nations charter, the most important achievement of the human community in the 20th century. Our request is simple: the council must act now, condemn this act of aggression, stop the aggressor, and defend the charter and international law, but the council has failed to do that. Its silence and indifference undermine the credibility and foundations of the United Nations.

We thank those members of the Security Council who stood on the right side of history. We also thank our regional partners in various mechanisms, including the OIC and the Group of Friends in Defense of the Charter of the United Nations, for their principled stand and joint statement in condemning this aggression and supporting Iran's right to self-defence.

Iran will continue to exercise its right to self-defence until Israeli regime aggression stops, or the international community, and especially the Security Council, takes meaningful action. Yesterday, we sent another letter to address the Secretary-General and the Security Council, repeating our urgent request. We call on the Security Council to condemn this act of aggression, hold aggressors and their enablers accountable, and take urgent action to prevent further aggression. Inaction will only embolden the aggressor and weaken the rule of law.

Q2 Chair: The challenge is very clear, Your Excellency. I am so sorry to interrupt, and I do not mean to be disrespectful, but we only have until 4 o'clock, when we have a number of votes, and we may have about 10 questions for you.

Seyed Ali Mousavi: May I finish?

Chair: If it just takes a moment.



Seyed Ali Mousavi: It will damage the credibility of the United Nations and its achievements in maintaining international peace and security, and the rule of law at the international level. Let us not forget that Israel is the only regime in our region with nuclear weapons. It has refused to join the NPT and place its facilities under IAEA safeguards. It has attacked almost all of its neighbours, and continues to commit atrocities without consequences. Iran will continue to act within the framework of international law.

We will defend ourselves lawfully and proportionately, but it is the primary responsibility of the international community, including the United Kingdom, to maintain international peace and security. The international community must act now to stop the genocidal aggressor from committing further atrocities against our people.

I thank you, Madam Thornberry, and the other distinguished ladies and gentlemen, for your attention.

Q3 Chair: Thank you. The question that many members of the British public may be asking and have heard from those who have been thinking about this—and particularly those who are friends with Israel and who believe in Israel's right to exist and to be able to live in peace—is this: what is Israel to do when it has a belligerent neighbour who says things such as Ahmadinejad said in 2005, which was that Israel should be “wiped from the map”, or such as the Supreme Leader said, which was that Israel was “a dangerous and fatal cancer”, or that “with Allah's help, there will be no such thing as a Zionist regime in 25 years”? There is this rhetoric.

It is also thought that Iran supports and arms the Houthis, and supports Hamas and Hezbollah, and that they are being used as proxies to attack Israel. There are these two things.

Then they see evidence of Iran not just having nuclear material, which is at 3.6%, which is the amount that is necessary for civilian use, but continuing to enrich it. It is certainly at 60%, and may even be at 80% to 90% purity, which is what is needed for a bomb. Those looking at this situation say, “Israel may not have been directly attacked, but it looks like Iran may have up to 90% purity. They have proxies who are attacking it, and there is this belligerent language. What is Israel to do?”

That question is an important one for me to ask you, and it is important for us to be able to have an answer. I appreciate that it is quite a profound one. I also want you to give short answers, if it is at all possible to answer such a profound question shortly.

Seyed Ali Mousavi: It is impossible, but I am trying.

Chair: We have a number of other questions to pile on after that.

Seyed Ali Mousavi: Thank you. First of all, let me come to the *raison d'être* of the establishment of the Israeli regime. The Israeli regime was established on occupation, on apartheid, and without any application of



HOUSE OF COMMONS

the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people. This is the main problem.

Chair: That does not answer the question about nuclear.

Seyed Ali Mousavi: I am coming to it. This is very important. You come to the root causes. If you want to have a good analysis, you should go to the history and study more about the details of these problems that we have in our region.

Regarding matters related to the Iranian side, you mentioned President Ahmadinejad. We always reiterated the convening of one very public and fair referendum in the occupied territories, with the participation of the Jewish people, Christians, and Muslims, in line with the self-determination of the people who are living there. There is no intention from the Iranian side to go to the military phase. This is the main problem. This is the fundamental argument that we have.

You mentioned so-called proxies. No. They are their own nations. The Yemeni people or Palestinian people— Hamas and the liberation organisation—are trying to achieve self-determination and to punish the occupiers. That is it.

Q4 **Edward Morello:** But you are providing arms to them. You are providing arms and funding to ideological groups that share your view, and they are delivering the outcome that Iran wishes.

Seyed Ali Mousavi: We had the very important Islamic revolution, which is a source of inspiration to all people in our region. The Islamic revolution insisted on self-determination, which is a very important right, and the elimination of all discrimination and apartheid in our region. This is not ideology. These are only legal matters according to international law. From the Iranian side, that will inspire them, according to our international co-operation all over the world.

Q5 **Chair:** Your Excellency, you are saying that all that Iran supplies to the Houthis, to Hamas and to Hezbollah is inspiration. There is no assistance of any other sort. There are no weapons or any other support given to those groups by Iran.

Seyed Ali Mousavi: Iran, as a sovereign state, has its own international co-operation with all of the world. It is very important, as your Government has international co-operation with the Israeli regime. It is very important and fundamental. If you want to intervene in our relations with other people, it is prohibited by international law. They are inspired by the Iranian Islamic revolution. The Islamic revolution is a very important source of self-determination. You see the combating of all apartheid and discrimination not only in this region but all over the world. At the time, we had the same problem with the South African apartheid regime.

Chair: Before we go into that, may I go back to Edward, who has a wider



question about where next?

- Q6 **Edward Morello:** I do. I would take a slightly different view to what you have just outlined, Ambassador. Members of the IRGC providing military training to Iranian proxies have been assassinated in Lebanon and Iraq. I am not sure that the idea that Iran is not providing material support to countries that are attacking Israel is backed up by the evidence on the ground.

In terms of what Iran's escalation options are, is it Iran's intention to close the strait of Hormuz?

Seyed Ali Mousavi: First of all, regarding our activities in the south of Lebanon, it comes according to the request from their people and their Government. The Israeli regime invaded Lebanon. This is the root cause. The Israeli regime invaded Lebanon, and the Lebanese people and Government requested us to help them. It is very simple. If you want to talk about the IRGC sending some things for these issues, the IRGC is one very important component of the Iranian system. You have the same army in your country and in other countries. Why are you blaming the IRGC?

Edward Morello: I am simply pointing out that there is evidence that counters your argument that Iran is not providing any material military aid, but we are getting sidetracked.

Chair: Let us not get sidetracked.

- Q7 **Edward Morello:** I want to understand what Iran's plans are if it is not to come to the negotiating table. Does Iran plan to escalate the conflict by closing the strait of Hormuz, or is Iran willing to rule that out completely? As a country that is heavily reliant on the free movement of goods around the globe, we have a vested interest in freedom of navigation in the strait of Hormuz. On behalf of your Government, can you make clear what their position and intentions are?

Seyed Ali Mousavi: We are always ready to apply for diplomatic and negotiated solutions. We always declared that the first priority of the Iranian Government is diplomacy. We were in the middle of diplomacy. We were in the very middle of the negotiations with the American side. Unfortunately, Netanyahu destroyed it with his aggression against us. Now, I am telling to you, Excellency, that yesterday our Minister had a conversation with your Minister, Secretary Lammy, and with those from France, Germany and the European Union. We declared that the first priority is diplomacy, provided that, subject to a ceasefire, the Israeli regime stops its armed attack on the Iranian people and infrastructure. It is very important and very simple.

- Q8 **Chair:** It is very important to hear that. Essentially, you are saying that what Iran wants is a ceasefire and it wants to go back to negotiations.

Seyed Ali Mousavi: Yes.

- Q9 **Chair:** What is the bottom line when it comes to negotiations? There



HOUSE OF COMMONS

clearly have been changes. The IAEA inspectors say that they are not getting the access that they used to. They are concerned about what Iran is doing with its nuclear material. The nuclear material seems to be being made increasingly pure. If there were to be negotiations, would there be a change in the Iranian position vis-à-vis nuclear enrichment?

Seyed Ali Mousavi: As a responsible member state of the IAEA, we had very extensive and comprehensive co-operation with the IAEA before and after the JCPOA. The JCPOA has its own legal requirement upon us. On the other hand, the IAEA has its safeguard agreements. Under the JCPOA, beside the IAEA statute and safeguards department, we have extra monitoring by the IAEA, and our voluntary activities attract the international community's trust in us in terms of confidence building. Iran's nuclear activity is totally peaceful. According to this, the IAEA produced 15 reports that there is no deviation or diversion in Iranian nuclear activities from the peaceful to the military phase.

The JCPOA was squandered by United States during the first Trump Administration. We request European countries to fulfil their obligations, and there is no doubt that we will fulfil their expectations. Unfortunately, the E3 did not have any good functions in this regard, because all of them are saying and observing what the United States is telling them. This is the problem.

Chair: You would find many people who would agree that it was very unfortunate that the original agreement was not stuck to and that the Americans walked away from it, but we are where we are now. Surely you understand that the rest of the world found the last report from the IAEA quite worrying.

I was going to go on to Blair, but I will move to Abtisam first, because what she says next is going to be of relevance.

Q10 **Abtisam Mohamed:** Ambassador, there have been numerous media reports in relation to Iran preparing a Bill in Parliament to leave the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. Why would Iran do this?

Seyed Ali Mousavi: In our system, the Parliament is an independent organ and can submit draft law for everything. One of them is denunciation from the NPT, but it has not yet been adopted by the Parliament. It is not the Government's intention. According to our defence doctrine, our religious teachings and our international obligations, including the NPT, we have not chosen to exit the NPT, but this is one of the proposals raised by Iranian parliamentarians.

Q11 **Abtisam Mohamed:** Does this give the indication that, by leaving the NPT, you intend to militarise your nuclear facilities?

Seyed Ali Mousavi: No. I told you that, in terms of weapons of mass destruction, there is no status in our defence doctrine. We are a member of the CWC, the NPT and the BWC.

Q12 **Abtisam Mohamed:** Why not remain a member of the NPT? Why leave?



HOUSE OF COMMONS

Seyed Ali Mousavi: It depends on the situation. Article 10 of the NPT is very important and states that if any state party feels that its vital interests have been threatened by somebody, it will undertake a review. There is no doubt about it.

Please give me the photos of the innocent people. These are innocent people, all of whom have been killed. We are responsible for these people—all of them. This is Ehsan Eshraghi and Baran Eshraghi, a father and daughter.

Chair: We have—

Seyed Ali Mousavi: Excuse me. Let me. Mahya Nikzad—

Edward Morello: I am sorry, Ambassador, but we have—

Seyed Ali Mousavi: This is very important. These are innocent people and civilians. I am the representative of these people in this country.

Chair: Sorry, but we have rules about props and not showing photographs and so on. I am so sorry. As I said at the outset, we are completely sympathetic. The deaths of civilians on both sides are simply appalling, and we want it to stop. That is really what this hearing is about.

Seyed Ali Mousavi: Thank you.

Q13 **Blair McDougall:** Ambassador, you spoke with apparent passion at the beginning of your statement about how dangerous the world would be if we embolden aggression and do not act within international law. The Chair asked you for short answers, so I will give you the opportunity to give a short answer. How many Iranian Shahed drones have been fired by Putin at Ukraine over the last three years? I am just looking for a number.

Seyed Ali Mousavi: You see—

Blair McDougall: I am just looking for a number.

Seyed Ali Mousavi: I will reply to you. There is no doubt. The Russian and Iranian defence co-operations originated more than 20 years ago.

Q14 **Blair McDougall:** Do you know the number?

Seyed Ali Mousavi: No. I do not know the number.

Q15 **Blair McDougall:** I will tell you the number. The number is 8,000. I put it to you that, if we live in a world now where violence and might are taking precedent over law and right, the Iranian regime has a deep responsibility for that.

Let me ask you another question. Again, this is a question with a simple number as an answer. The director general of MI5 identified a number of plots backed by Iran in this country, including lethal threats against Iranian dissidents and Jewish communities here. How many plots has he



HOUSE OF COMMONS

identified in the last three years?

Seyed Ali Mousavi: He claimed 22, but let me answer you. This is very important. Please correct your wording. The Iranian Government are a lawful and very important, significant and respectful Government. There is no need to use "regime" for them.

Q16 **Blair McDougall:** What is the legal basis for Putin's war, then, if you are such a supporter of international law?

Seyed Ali Mousavi: I am telling you to correct your wording regarding my Government. My Government are a legal Government, and there is no doubt about it. You should not use the word "regime". It is a very lawful and legally responsible state in the world.

Q17 **Blair McDougall:** What is the legal basis for Putin's war in Ukraine that you have been supporting, if you are a fan of international law?

Seyed Ali Mousavi: I will answer you. Please let me finish. Our defence co-operation between Iran and the Russian Federation is very important. We declared to the Russian side not to use our co-operation against a third party. You can ask them.

Q18 **Blair McDougall:** 8,000 Shahed drones have been fired at Ukraine. We are not allowed to do props, but seeing as you did, there is one of your drones hitting an apartment block in Kiev last night.

Seyed Ali Mousavi: You can ask this question of the Russian Federation, sir.

Blair McDougall: They are your weapons.

Seyed Ali Mousavi: I will ask this question of you, or the American side, who are using the same military equipment against the Iranian people. Do you not have any defence or military co-operation between Israel and Britain?

Blair McDougall: I am suggesting—

Seyed Ali Mousavi: Yes or no?

Blair McDougall: You are here to answer questions, Ambassador.

Seyed Ali Mousavi: No. This is very important.

Q19 **Blair McDougall:** I am suggesting that your moral authority is shredded by your support for Putin.

Seyed Ali Mousavi: If you ask me to answer your question, Excellency, you have a duty to answer my question, because this is a dialogue room. I came here to declare our concerns to the responsible state, the United Kingdom. I respect the United Kingdom for its achievements in the world's human community. The United Kingdom is a member state of the United Nations Security Council. Why do you not condemn the Israeli armed attacks on Iran? You have not condemned it.



HOUSE OF COMMONS

Chair: Your Excellency, we are very grateful—

Seyed Ali Mousavi: Excuse me. He asked me a question regarding MI5. May I answer it?

Q20 **Chair:** What I would like to do is just take a breath. We are very grateful to you for coming. The evidence that you have given in the round is what is important. It is the evidence that you give, and we listen to what it is that you say. What we are trying to do by asking questions is to test what you are saying.

Seyed Ali Mousavi: Thank you so much.

Chair: We are not really in a position to speak on behalf of the British Government. We are here to test your evidence and to try to make a contribution, so that we can hear the Iranian point of view and not just take it at face value, but also test it. That is what we are trying to do in good faith.

Q21 **Sir John Whittingdale:** I would just like to follow up from Blair's question, Ambassador. You will be aware that the British Government have said that Iran represents one of the greatest threats to the security of the United Kingdom and for that reason is the first nation to be placed on the enhanced tier of the foreign influence registration scheme.

You referred in your opening remark to the attack on the Iranian broadcasting organisation, which you described as a war crime. I have been to visit Iran International, which is based in London and whose journalists have been subjected to threats from Iran on a daily basis. A journalist was stabbed in a London street, and Iranian citizens are currently being accused of conducting that. I have also talked to BBC Persian journalists, whose families are being daily harassed by the Iranian regime in Tehran. Why are those not war crimes, and how do you defend the behaviour of the Iranian Government?

Seyed Ali Mousavi: I think this is an irrelevant question—I am sorry, sir. I am talking about Israeli aggression, but, out of respect, I will respond to you. These claims have been raised by different people. We need evidence. We ask the Foreign Office several times for consultation meetings with the military services regarding the addresses, and all of these issues. These issues are some allegations against and blaming my country. We have some criticism regarding BBC Persian's activities. They are intervening in Iranian domestic affairs. According to our bilateral diplomatic relations, we have suggested several times to the British authorities considering bilateral consultations. There is no doubt about it. If you have any evidence, please submit it, and we will consider it.

The Excellency mentioned the MI5 report. More than 10 times, we declared by verbal note, in diplomatic negotiations, that we will send our security services to resolve these matters raised in our bilateral relations. We have very constructive, business-like diplomatic relations. Your ambassador, Mr Hugo Shorter, is working in your embassy in Tehran. I came to London after a three-year vacancy during which time we had no



HOUSE OF COMMONS

ambassador. I am very keen to provide and prepare different co-operation between Iran and the United Kingdom.

I assure you, sir, that the Iranian side is ready to co-operate on everything—cultural, economic, security, everything. According to your evidence and ours, we can share it.

Q22 Sir John Whittingdale: Ambassador, in terms of the statement by the director general of the security service that there have been over 20 assassination and abduction plots, you say that the Iranian Government have no responsibility for those. You referred earlier to your support for freedom of the press in terms of the Iranian Broadcasting Corporation. While you may have criticisms of the BBC Persian service, there has been no harassment or intimidation of their relatives, and the Government of Iran are not responsible for any threats against Iranian journalists based in London working for Iran International. Is that the case?

Seyed Ali Mousavi: Excellency, I told you that all of these matters should be considered between the expert groups. These are claims. There is no doubt that the Iranian side is ready to co-operate with the British side to consider and remove these kinds of misunderstandings.

Q23 Alex Ballinger: Ambassador, you talked at the start of your statement about Israel attacking civilian nuclear facilities across Iran. I understand from wide reporting that Iran has been enriching uranium up to 60% in a large quantity, and now up to 80 or 90%. In both cases, there is no civilian purpose for this uranium. It can only be moving towards the development of a nuclear weapon. What justification is Iran giving for enriching this uranium and moving beyond any civilian needs?

Seyed Ali Mousavi: First of all, all of this enrichment has been declared to the IAEA. During our war with the Israeli regime, there are some IAEA inspectors in Natanz and other nuclear facilities in Iran. They are monitoring all of our nuclear activities, including enrichment. According to the expertise of different people whose profession is in nuclear matters, this kind of enrichment is only for peaceful activities. That is it. We do not have any aim—

Q24 Alex Ballinger: What are these peaceful activities?

Seyed Ali Mousavi: You can ask this question of different experts and technical people.

Alex Ballinger: I am asking you.

Seyed Ali Mousavi: I am telling you. I learn these matters from them. According to their explanation, all of these matters have been monitored by the IAEA. There are some ambiguities, and we declared to the IAEA that we are ready to remove any ambiguities. There is no intention on our side to enrich to the level of a nuclear bomb. Unfortunately, politically motivated activities of the E3 in the recent session of the board of



HOUSE OF COMMONS

governors of the IAEA made another mistake that the Israeli regime used as a pretext to attack us.

Regarding your question, I am telling you that all activities of the Iranian atomic energy organisation are peaceful. You can ask sophisticated questions of the experts.

- Q25 **Chair:** I do not want to interrupt, but I just want to put context in, so that the public understand. On 13 June, the International Atomic Energy Agency's board of governors formally declared Iran in breach of its non-proliferation obligations for the first time in 20 years. That is the reference that you are making to "politically motivated attacks". Is that right?

Seyed Ali Mousavi: Yes.

- Q26 **Alex Ballinger:** The belief of many of us in here is that there is no civilian justification for the enrichment of uranium up to the point that you have suggested. It does give credence to the fact that Iran is developing a nuclear weapon and is almost a threshold state. You can understand why a country such as Israel, which has been threatened so many times by Iran, would find that an extremely serious security threat.

Seyed Ali Mousavi: If there are any differences between Iran and the IAEA, all matters should be addressed through diplomacy and according to technical consultations, not by giving a pretext for an illegal and illegitimate regime such as Israel to attack us.

- Q27 **Edward Morello:** I just wanted to follow up on Alex's point, Ambassador. There is a realpolitik element to this. Iran wants there to be a ceasefire before there is a negotiation. The position of Israel and the United States is that Iran needs to give up its enrichment programme and return, at the very least, to a civilian level.

Given that Iran has, effectively, lost control of its airspace, the IDF can act with impunity across Iran, your proxies are refusing to respond to Israel's attack and you are rapidly running out of ballistic missiles to respond to Israel's attacks, the reality on the ground would dictate that Iran has very little scope but to come to the negotiation table. If Iran has no nuclear weapon ambition, why will it not just say that the price of the ceasefire that you are willing to pay is to give up your nuclear enrichment programme?

Seyed Ali Mousavi: The main intention in this phase is removing any concern or worries that different countries in the international community have, especially in Europe, around the essence of Iranian nuclear activities. We assure you that there is no limitation on our side to removing any concerns. As we declared, it is our priority to remove any misunderstanding.

We do not want to achieve a nuclear weapon. In the IAEA's 15 reports and the implementation of the JCPOA, we showed our intention that Iran



HOUSE OF COMMONS

does not have any desire to produce a nuclear bomb. This is because we are a responsible member state of the NPT, as well as—

Q28 **Edward Morello:** The reality on the ground dictates that, in the current situation—

Seyed Ali Mousavi: The reality on the ground is the IAEA inspector. The IAEA has a very different interaction with us.

Q29 **Edward Morello:** The price of a ceasefire is going to be giving up your nuclear enrichment. That is the obvious situation on the ground right now. If you have no nuclear ambitions, why will Iran simply not commit to ceasing enrichment, handing over what has been enriched and going back to 3.6% for civilian use? That would be the price of a ceasefire.

Seyed Ali Mousavi: There is no doubt that we agree with you, but through diplomacy, not an armed attack.

Q30 **Chair:** The other thing that many people may wonder about is this point about Iran perhaps being very close to being able to build a nuclear bomb.

Seyed Ali Mousavi: Why, madam?

Chair: Because the IAEA has said that you have breached it, and because the nuclear material is becoming so pure, and is much purer than is needed. The counterargument, which people do need to hear, and is something that needs to be expressed here today, is that Iran has, for a few months, been close to being able to build something, and still has not, over a period of many years.

Edward's question is, if it is true that you do not intend to go any further, first of all, why do you have material of such purity? Secondly, if you do not intend to use it, the price of peace may be to go back to the 3.6% that you would need just to be able to use it for civilian purposes. That, we hope, would mean that civilians would stop being killed on both sides.

Seyed Ali Mousavi: All of our nuclear activities are purely peaceful, and all of them are monitored by the IAEA. There were some ambiguities raised by the non-implementation of the JCPOA by the European and American side. That caused a problem for us. We adhered to all obligations through the safeguard agreement, as well as the statute of the IAEA. Please accept our assurances that, in the Iranian system, there is no desire or intention to produce a nuclear bomb. This is very important. It is not only in terms of international obligations. It is in our religious teachings that all weapons of mass destruction are prohibited according to the Shi'a, sharia, and Islamic—

Q31 **Chair:** There is a fatwa to that.

Seyed Ali Mousavi: Yes, there is a fatwa from the Supreme Leader.

Chair: The counterargument is that a fatwa can be changed.



HOUSE OF COMMONS

Q32 **Dan Carden:** We might be interrupted by bells, but I will have a go. Welcome, Ambassador. It strikes me that any attempt to get to a diplomatic outcome is going to require trust on all sides. Trust is something that the Iranian regime simply does not have. You talked in your opening remarks about international law. You talked about the loss of civilian life. I wanted to ask you about reports that the Iranian regime itself has widespread—

Seyed Ali Mousavi: Iranian Government.

Dan Carden: The regime has murdered—

Seyed Ali Mousavi: Iranian Government. Please.

Dan Carden: —over 1,000 of its citizens in 2024. Do you know how many of your own citizens the Iranian regime has murdered this year, in 2025?

Seyed Ali Mousavi: I am sorry, Excellency, but there is a very dangerous and mistaken assumption in your question. Your question is not correct.

Dan Carden: They are UN figures.

Seyed Ali Mousavi: As the Iranian ambassador to you, why are you referring to misunderstandings, misinformation and disinformation? All of them are totally wrong. I am telling you that nobody is perfect—we do have some problems—but these kinds of question have their own false assumptions and are based on misunderstandings and misperceptions. I am sorry.

Q33 **Chair:** My apologies. We have to go and vote. I want to thank you for coming in this afternoon. I hope that people watching have had a proper insight into your perspective, and have also seen us challenge some of the things that you have said. Hopefully, it will amount to greater understanding between us. We do hope that there will be peace in the near future and a de-escalation of this conflict.

Seyed Ali Mousavi: I am very thankful, Madam Thornberry, for your invitation and for giving me this chance to declare my points of view to you and to all of the distinguished people here. Thank you so much.

Chair: Thank you very much, Your Excellency.