

Constant Vigilance

The day before Holocaust Remembrance Day, Iran's President Ahmadinejad addressed the United Nations anti-racism conference in Geneva. Here, he did a great favor for all who love Israel—he was honest. He let his virulent hate for Israel and bizarre anti-Semitic conspiracy theories flow from his tongue largely unfiltered. It was an ugly performance.

The delegates from most European nations walked out on Ahmadinejad's speech. Even UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, was moved to criticism. Most other delegates, of course, remained in their seats. Many cheered.

But Ahmadinejad is rarely so honest. And he is rarely so helpful. It is what this man does in the shadows—not what he says in public—that is most dangerous. And what he does in the dark typically gets far less attention.

In a little-noted development last week, the Israeli newspaper Haaretz, citing an Egyptian source, reported that unidentified warships torpedoed an Iranian cargo ship off the coast of Sudan. The Iranian ship was reported to be laden with weapons bound for the Gaza Strip. The warship is believed to have been Israeli

In January, there were numerous reports that unidentified warplanes attacked a convoy of trucks passing through the Sudanese desert. The trucks were reported to be filled with Iranian arms bound for Gaza. Well-placed sources have confirmed that the planes belonged to Israel.

Israeli observers believe that this arms convoy contained Iranian Fajr rockets. Such rockets—with a range of 70 kilometers—

Looming large behind all of these efforts against Israel, of

course, is Iran's nuclear program. Iran continues to enrich uranium in contravention of United Nations resolutions. In February, United Nations officials acknowledged that Iran now has enough enriched uranium for an atomic weapon.

Which leads us to one final news item from last week. In hearings before Congress, Secretary of State Hilary Clinton warned that the US is laying the groundwork for "crippling sanctions" against Iran if diplomacy fails to stop its nuclear program. This is a certainly a positive development. Offering Mr. Ahmadinejad carrots without a stick in sight was unlikely to elicit much of a response.

The Iranian threat is not going away. And walking out on Ahmadinejad's speeches—while important and deeply appreciated—does nothing to stop his steady, daily, determined actions to confront Israel. Offering negotiations—while quite possibly a good way to build greater international support—must not be allowed to turn into yet another opportunity for Ahmadinejad to delay and stall. It is time for the world to graduate from gestures to actions.

Iran has proven itself able to talk and act at the same time. The Israelis, too, are acting with constant vigilance to keep Iran from arming its proxies on Israel's border. There is no reason why we should not act as well. There is indeed a time for "crippling sanctions" against Iran. That time is now.

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