Extent

218 folders, approximately 9,202 pages

Summary

This collection consists of records related to Iran in 1997. Topics include Executive Order 13059, which prohibited certain trade activities with Iran; and the South Pars Gas Deal, a $2 billion dollar foreign investment contract to develop part of an offshore gas field in the Persian Gulf. Also included are records regarding Russia's assistance to Iran's ballistic missile program and the State Department's designation of the Mujahedin e-Khalq (MEK), an Iranian opposition group, as a terrorist organization. The collection contains memoranda, press releases and briefings, news articles, drafts, executive orders, and email.

Scope and Content Note

The materials in FOIA 2008-0731-F are a selective body of documents responsive to the topic of the FOIA. Researchers should consult the archivist about related materials. FOIA 2008-0731-F concerns records related to Iran in 1997. The United States severed diplomatic relations with Iran in 1980 following the seizure of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran on November 4, 1979 by a group of revolutionary Iranian students. The students, who were angered that the deposed Shah had been allowed to enter the United States, held 52 Americans hostage for 444 days. Currently, diplomatic relations between the two countries have not been restored. The U.S. does, however, maintain an interest section at the Swiss Embassy in Tehran and Iran has a corresponding interest section at the Pakistani Embassy in Washington, D.C. Records responsive to this request include correspondence, memoranda, press releases and briefings, news articles, drafts, executive orders, email, and transmittal sheets. Several documents deal with U.S. efforts to terminate Russia's assistance to Iran's ballistic missile program. President Clinton sent Frank Wisner, retired U.S. Ambassador to India, to Moscow to investigate the issue with Yuriy Koptev, the head

of the Russian space agency. Included are letters from members of Congress calling for sanctions against Russia under the Iran Missile Proliferation Sanctions Act of 1997. A letter from Secretary of State Madeleine Albright is also included explaining the administration's opposition to the Act, which was later vetoed by President Clinton. Documents dealing with investment in Iran, specifically the South Pars Gas Deal, are also included. In September 1997, three firms: Total (France), Gazprom (Russia) and Petronas (Malaysia), signed a $2 billion contract to develop part of the South Pars offshore gas field in the Persian Gulf. Members of Congress wrote the President arguing that sanctions should be brought against the companies under the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act of 1996 because the deal provided financial support to Iran's nuclear ambitions and its terrorist activities. In response, President Clinton wrote that he also opposed the deal and that a State Department investigation was ongoing. European countries, however, didn't want to use trade to pressure the Islamic republic and resisted attempts by the United States for them to take punitive measures against the three companies involved in the transaction. Sanctions against the firms would be waived by the Department of State in 1998. Records responsive to this FOIA also includes a letter signed by 224 members of Congress to the President opposing the State Department's designation of the Mujahedin e-Khalq (MEK) as a terrorist organization. The letter describes the MEK as the "main opposition group to the current Iranian regime" and "a legitimate resistance against one of the most brutal dictatorships in modern history". In President Clinton's response he points to the terrorist activities of the group including participation in the 1979 seizure of the American Embassy in Tehran and the assassination of American military personnel. According to the President, "The MEK is a terrorist organization, as defined by law. The group has deliberately targeted civilians for political purposes, held hostages, and inflicted major damage to infrastructure." In the White House Office of Records Management (WHORM) Subject Files-General, several folders contain drafts of Executive Order No. 13059, which prohibited certain trade activities with Iran. A letter to the Speaker of the House from President Clinton outlines the details of the embargo and includes the reasoning behind continuing to put it into effect. Also included are news articles and press guidance on a number of different topics, including China-Iran missile sales and the Foreign Assistance Act, which required the transmittal to Congress on an annual basis a list of the major illicit drug producing and transit countries, which included Iran. The WHORM Subject Files-CF contain letters from Senators Sam Brownback (Republican-Kansas) and Robert Torricelli (Democrat-New Jersey) questioning the stance of the Clinton

Administration toward Iran on a number of issues. In response the President writes, “We are also engaging our allies to find ways to advance common goals toward Iran and to make clear to Iran where we stand.” Responsive email from the Automated Records Management System consists of correspondence concerning drafts of Executive Order 13059. The majority of the records related to this FOIA case are closed for national security reasons.

Record Type

Textual

System of Arrangement

Records that are responsive to this FOIA request were found in these collections areas—Clinton Presidential Records: WHORM Subject Files, Clinton Presidential Records: WHORM Subject Files CF, Clinton Presidential Records: White House Staff and Office Files, Clinton Presidential Records: ARMS Emails, and Clinton Presidential Records: NSC Cable, Email, and Records Management Systems. The White House of Records Management (WHORM) contains a variety of series created to organize and track documents and correspondence. The WHORM Subject file was compiled by the White House Office of Records Management and is a series of categories designated by a letter/number combination. Staff and Office files were maintained at the folder level by staff members within their individual offices and document all levels of administration activity. WHORM files are processed at the document level; whereas, Staff and Office files are processed at the folder level, that is, individual documents are not selected and removed from a folder for processing. While this method maintains folder integrity, it frequently results in the incidental processing of documents that are not wholly responsive to the subject area. The Automated Records Management System (ARMS) is a database that contains email records of the Executive Office of the President. This system maintained unclassified Presidential email. The ARMS database is comprised of six sub-series of email records called “buckets.” The buckets generally represent a specific White House office. The buckets are titled: NPR for National Performance Review, OPD for Office of Policy Development, POTUS for President of the United States, WHO for White House Office, CEA for Council of Economic Advisers, and Default for emails not

associated with an office. The WHO bucket contains email created or received by an individual with an Executive Office of the President White House user account not identified as CEA, NPR, or OPD. ARMS emails are arranged by topic, there-under by bucket, and there-under chronologically by creation date. FOIA 2008-0731-F includes WHORM records from these subject codes: [CO079] [Iran] [CO082] [Israel] [FG001] [President of the United States] [HE006-01] [Narcotics] [ND017] [Weapons – Ordnance – Munitions] [PR013-08] [Opinions – Statements – Questionnaires – Articles] [PU001-07] [Clippings to the President].

Access

Collection is open to all researchers. Access to Clinton Presidential Records is governed by the Presidential Records Act (PRA) (44 U.S.C. Chapter 22, as amended) and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552, as amended) and therefore records may be restricted in whole or in part in accordance with legal exemptions.

Copyright

Documents in this collection that were prepared by officials of the United States government as part of their official duties are in the public domain. Researchers are advised to consult the copyright law of the United States (17 U.S.C. Chapter 1) which governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material.

Provenance

Official records of William Jefferson Clinton’s presidency are housed at the Clinton Presidential Library and administered by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) under the provisions of the Presidential Records Act (PRA).

Processed by

Staff Archivist, 2014. Previously restricted materials are added as they are released.

Last Modified Date

2016-07-26

Container List

The following is a list of documents and folders processed in response to FOIA 2008-0731-F:
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Category Case Number
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203509SS
207645
208902SS
224804SS
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231466SS [3]
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242431SS [1]
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CO082 246962SS
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HE006-01 241825SS [1]
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PR013-08 224705SS
PU001-07 206384SS
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CO079 242885SS
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Clinton Presidential Records: White House Staff and Office Files
National Security Council
Defense Policy
Bell, Robert
Iranian Missiles, October – December 1997 [OA/ID 3658]
Intelligence Programs
Beers, Rand
[Iran, 1997] [1] [OA/ID 2634]
[Iran, 1997] [2] [OA/ID 2634]
[Iran, 1997] [3] [OA/ID 2634]
McCarthy, Mary/Appel, Edward/Gregory, Susan
Iran – Counterintelligence, 1997 [OA/ID 2658]
Mitchell, Don
Iran, 1996 – 1997 [1] [OA/ID 3032]
Iran, 1996 – 1997 [2] [OA/ID 3032]
Iran, 1996 – 1997: [Briefing for Samuel Berger] [OA/ID 3032]

Iran, 1996 – 1997: [Iran 1996 Proposal] [OA/ID 3032]
[Iran – 1997] [OA/ID 3034]
Multilateral and Humanitarian Affairs
Schwartz, Eric
Iran, 1993 – 1997 [OA/ID 3070]
Nonproliferation and Export Controls
[Russia/Iran Cooperation on Missiles, 1997 – 1999] [1] [OA/ID 2617]
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Wisner – Koptev, 1997 [Missiles to Iran] [13] [OA/ID 2618]
Wisner – Koptev, 1997 [Missiles to Iran] [14] [OA/ID 2618]
Samore, Gary
[Iran Missile Proliferation, 1997] [Binder] [OA/ID 3371]
Russia/Iran Nuclear, 1997 [1] [OA/ID 3371]
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Russia – Iran Conventional Arms [3] [OA/ID 3371]
Press
Gobush, Matthew

ILSA [Iran – Libya Sanctions Act] Communications, November 1997
[OA/ID 3108]
Records Management
DC0352 [DC Meeting on Iran, April 17, 1997] [OA/ID 3908]
PC0223 [PC Meeting on Iran and The Mykonos Trial, April 18, 1997] [OA/ID
3904]
PC0240 [PC Meeting on Iran, October 24, 1997] [1] [OA/ID 3904]
PC0240 [PC Meeting on Iran, October 24, 1997] [2] [OA/ID 3904]
Russia/Ukraine/Eurasian Affairs
Matera, Michael
Russia – Relations – Iran [OA/ID 2679]
Transnational Threats
Clarke, Richard
[Demarche] [OA/ID 3581]
[Government Structure of the Islamic Republic of Iran] [Poster] [OA/ID 3581]
[Iran and the United States] [OA/ID 3581]
[Iran, April 1997] [OA/ID 3581]
[Iranian Terrorism, February – March 1997] [OA/ID 3581]
[Iranian Terrorism, May – June 1997] [OA/ID 3581]
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[List of Khobar Bombing Materials] [OA/ID 3581]
[Principals Committee Discussion Paper] [OA/ID 3581]
[Reports on the Al Khubar Bombing, October – November 1997] [OA/ID 3581]
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[Reports Regarding Iran, December 1997] [OA/ID 3581]
Clinton Presidential Records: Automated Records Management System [Email]
WHO [OA/ID 500000]

[Subject: Iran]
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Clinton Presidential Records: NSC Cable, Email, and Records Management System
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MSMail-Record (Sept 94-Sept 97) [OA/ID 590000]
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[Iran]
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Exchange-Record (Sept 97-Jan 01) [OA/ID 620000]
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