Iran’s “unlikely to produce a sufficient quantity of highly enriched uranium... before early to mid-next decade.” (2005)

“Barring an unexpected delay, Iran is going to become nuclear capable in 2008 and not in 10 years as was recently reported in the American press.” (2005)

“National Intelligence Estimate

They’re still a couple of years away, in a worst-case scenario, from being able to produce enough highly enriched uranium for nuclear weapons.” (2007)

“I think it’s perhaps more likely that they try to develop their nuclear capabilities over a much longer period of time, a decade or 15 years.” (2005)

“General Aharon Zeevi Farkash, Head of Israel Defense Forces

Hans Blix

David Albright

Gary Samore

International Institute of Strategic Studies

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei

Head of State, Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution. Ultimately calls the shots and has direct control over the military and courts.

Ahmadinejad

The prez. Technically has nothing to do with foreign relations, but has had an increasingly effective way of butting in. No one agrees on how much he’s a fool suffered by Khamenei or if he’s got power in his own right.

Ali Larijani

Head of the Supreme National Security Council. Khamenei’s right hand man when it comes to foreign policy.

Majles—aka Consultative Assembly.

Popularly elected. Makes laws—which have to be approved by the Council of Guardians. Members also have to be pre-screened by the Council and are occasionally arrested for speaking out against the government. In theory has the power to approve all international treaties.

Expediency Council

Majles and Council arbitrator (when the two bodies hit a road block). Headed by ex-president Rafsanjani, who seems to still be influential in foreign policy.

Council of Guardians

Makes sure Majles laws are kosher. Pretty much appointed by Khamenei’s peeps.

The Revolutionary Guards

The security A-team, formed during the revolution. Hardliners who play a bigger and bigger role in foreign policy.

Strategic Council for Foreign Relations

Newly created by Khamenei, some say to help deal with his Ahmadinejad problem.