

April 10, 2024

The Honorable Antony J. Blinken  
U.S. Secretary of State  
U.S. State Department  
2201 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20520

**Re: Visa for Islamic Republic of Iran's Foreign Minister**

Dear Secretary Blinken:

United Against Nuclear Iran (“UANI”) understands that the Islamic Republic of Iran’s Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian and an accompanying delegation will once again travel to New York City next week for meetings at the United Nations.<sup>1</sup> A meeting on the Israeli-Hamas conflict will reportedly be held on April 18, 2024. April 18 will mark the 41<sup>st</sup> anniversary of Hezbollah’s bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Lebanon. Amir-Abdollahian’s presence on U.S. soil would be an outrageous insult to the victims and their families. Under these circumstances, Amir-Abdollahian and his accompanying Iranian delegation should be denied a visa.

On April 18, 1983, a suicide bomber commissioned by Hezbollah drove a van packed with nearly 2,000 pounds of explosives into the U.S. Embassy in Beirut. It killed 63 people, including Americans, and injured 120 more. Later, an anonymous caller took responsibility for the attack by telephoning media outlets saying “this is part of the Iranian revolution’s campaign against imperialist targets throughout the world. We shall keep striking at any imperialist presence in Lebanon, including the multinational force.”<sup>2</sup> Later, in the leadup to Hezbollah’s next bombing of the U.S. Marine Barracks in Beirut in October 1983, the U.S. National Security Agency intercepted electronic messages from the Iranian regime’s Intelligence Ministry instructing its ambassador to Syria to order Hussein al-Musawi, the head of Hezbollah’s Islamic Amal faction, “to take a spectacular action against the U.S. Marines.”<sup>3</sup> It is worth noting that, at the time of the terrorist attack on the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) – the Iranian regime’s paramilitary force and a U.S.-designated foreign terrorist organization – was on the ground in Lebanon, establishing and directing Hezbollah’s operations.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Amwaj Media, “[Exclusive: Iranian Top Diplomat Due in US Amid Fears of Iran-Israel War](#),” April 8, 2024.

<sup>2</sup> Washington Post, “[Bomb Wrecks U.S. Embassy in Beirut](#),” April 18, 1983.

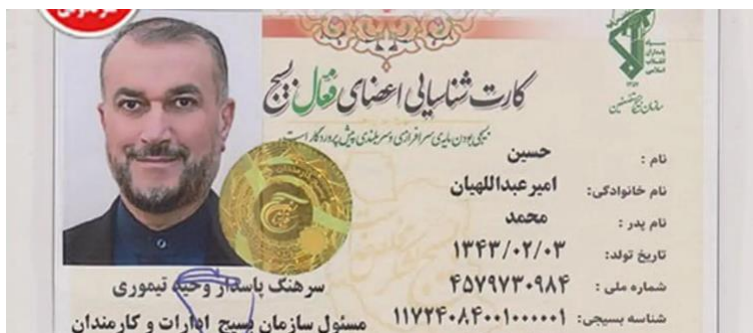
<sup>3</sup> United Against Nuclear Iran, Hezbollah.org, “[The Party of God and its Greatest Satan](#),” September 15, 2020.

<sup>4</sup> See Kasra Aarabi and Saeid Golkar, “[The View From Tehran: Iran’s Militia Doctrine](#)”, Tony Blair Institute February, 2021.



*Aftermath of Hezbollah’s Bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Beirut on April 18, 1983*

Four decades later, Amir-Abdollahian, who is a card-carrying senior member of the same IRGC—which incubated and directed Hezbollah’s terrorism in the 1980s—is being inexplicably welcomed into the United States. He is also irrefutably complicit in the October 7, 2023 massacre that took place in southern Israel. Following the atrocity, which left approximately 1,200 slaughtered, including American citizens, Amir-Abdollahian flew to Qatar to meet with the primary instigator of the October 7 atrocity, Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh, and to offer his congratulations and support. The Wall Street Journal has reported that Amir-Abdollahian personally participated in planning meetings for the October 7 attack. The same publication subsequently revealed that the IRGC provided training to 500 Hamas terrorists in Iran in the months before October 7.<sup>56</sup> Amir-Abdollahian has also repeatedly met with the Secretary-General of Hezbollah Hassan Nasrallah, the same organization which bombed the U.S. Embassy in Beirut 41 years ago.



*IRGC Membership Card of Islamic Republic of Iran’s Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian*

<sup>5</sup> Wall Street Journal, “[Hamas Fighters Trained in Iran Before Oct. 7 Attacks](#),” October 25, 2023.

<sup>6</sup> Wall Street Journal, “[Iran Helped Plot Attack on Israel Over Several Weeks](#),” October 8, 2023.



*Islamic Republic of Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian Meeting with Hezbollah's Secretary General in February 2024*

The U.S. government has repeatedly granted Amir-Abdollahian a visa despite his outrageous behavior on American soil. He has threatened the United States and engaged in anti-American and antisemitic diatribes while in Manhattan. Previous visits coincided with more instances of brutal domestic repression in Iran. While Amir-Abdollahian was in New York in January 2024, the regime executed Mohammad Ghobadlou, a 23-year-old Iranian protester—perhaps just as Amir-Abdollahian was ordering room service from his penthouse suite at the Millennium Hilton Hotel at UN Plaza. Regime executions of protesters have continued unabated and even escalated since the murder of Mahsa Amini while in police custody on September 16, 2022, an event which finally roused many members of the international community to appreciate the true heinous nature of the regime. Amnesty International found that Iran's regime executed 853 people in 2023, the highest number recorded since 2015.<sup>7</sup>

The United States has the sovereign right, irrespective of the U.N. Headquarters Agreement, to deny visas for “security, terrorism, and foreign policy” reasons.<sup>8</sup> There is precedent for the U.S. government to do so—for example, it denied a visa to the Iranian regime's then Foreign Minister Javad Zarif in January 2020.<sup>9</sup> Those circumstances surrounding the denial of a visa to Zarif, when the regime in Iran was considering retaliation for the U.S. targeted killing of former IRGC Quds Force Commander Qasem Soleimani, are similar to today, when there is an active threat against U.S. forces from Iran's regime after the Israeli strikes against senior IRGC commanders in Syria, including Mohammad Reza Zahedi, who has American blood on his hands as a onetime member of Hezbollah's Shura and Jihad Councils. As head of the IRGC's operations in the Levant, Zahedi personally oversaw the attacks on U.S. forces in Syria by IRGC proxies since October 7, including strikes that killed three U.S. soldiers.<sup>10</sup> Amir-Abdollahian has himself threatened that the United States should be held accountable for the strike on Zahedi, despite U.S. officials disclaiming any responsibility.

We remain highly concerned at the U.S. State Department's overly generous policy of granting visas to Iranians officials complicit in the regime's terrorism and repression. We wrote to the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs just last month to protest the visa given to the Iranian regime's vice president for women and family affairs despite her atrocious record in the abuse of women

<sup>7</sup> Washington Post, “[Iran Reaches Highest Number of Executions in Nearly a Decade](#),” April 4, 2024.

<sup>8</sup> See Joe Lieberman and Mark Wallace, “[No Visa for Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi](#),” Wall Street Journal, August 10, 2022.

<sup>9</sup> Reuters, “[U.S. denies Iran's Zarif a visa to attend U.N.: U.S. official](#),” January 7, 2020.

<sup>10</sup> See Jason M. Brodsky and Kasra Aarabi, “[Iran is Making a Mockery of the US](#)”, The Spectator, March 8, 2024

in Iran.<sup>11</sup> But we have not received a response. Both Democratic and Republican Members of Congress wrote to you last month as well demanding the U.S. State Department impose such visa restrictions.<sup>12</sup> In light of the above and out of respect for the victims of IRGC and Hezbollah terrorism, we urge you to rescind Amir-Abdollahian's visa and deny him entry to the United States.

We would therefore appreciate hearing from you at your earliest convenience to address these concerns. Thank you for your kind attention.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Wallace". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ambassador Mark D. Wallace

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<sup>11</sup> United Against Nuclear Iran, "[UANI Calls on U.S. State Department to Rescind Visa of Iran's Vice President for Women and Family Affairs](#)," March 11, 2024.

<sup>12</sup> Jewish Insider, "[Bipartisan Group of Lawmakers Calls on Administration to Block Iranian Leaders from U.N. Meetings in U.S.](#)," March 22, 2024.