**Iran Refuses to Pull Terrorist  U.N. Pick**

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Iran is insisting that the United States accept its decision to appoint a former terrorist as it representative to the United Nations, which held a [closed-door meeting](http://www.un.org/Docs/journal/En/lateste.pdf) on Tuesday to address Tehran’s concerns over the matter.

President Barack Obama signed into law last week a widely supported bill preventing countries from appointing terrorists as their U.N. ambassadors.

The bill came in [response](http://time.com/68606/terrorist-ambassador-bill-signed-barack-obama/) to Iran’s selection of Hamid Aboutalebi as its next envoy to the United Nations. The pick drew outrage on Capitol Hill and elsewhere after Aboutalibi was identified as having played a key role in the 1979 Iranian hostage crisis, as well as other terror activities.

The Obama administration announced last week that it would reject Aboutalibi’s visa, sparking outrage in Tehranand leading the country to force the issue at Tuesday’s closed-door U.N. session.

Iran lashed out over the decision, calling it a blow to international diplomacy. Tehran is now threatening to take legal action to ensure that Aboutalibi is stationed in New York City.

“Iran is persisting in attempts to somehow ram through a terrorist as its U.N. ambassador,” U.N. expert and human rights activist Anne Bayefsky told the *Washington Free Beacon*. “It makes sense for Iran, the lead state-sponsor of terrorism. It may even make sense for the U.N., which to this day has no definition of terrorism because of the chokehold of Islamic states on the organization.”

Bayefsky, who serves as director of the Touro Institute on Human Rights and the Holocaust (IHRH), recommended that Congress take “the next step—taking a much closer look at the many NGOs that the U.N. accredits and for which it generates passes, and that encourage terrorism and violence against the United States and its allies.”

Reports emerging from the U.N. indicate that Iran is poised to employ legal action and other maneuvers to ensure that Aboutalibi is appointed as its representative.

“The Iranian government ruled out to make a new appointment, and predicted that it will have resort to diplomatic and legal means to guarantee the admission of the ambassador they have named,” the publication Prensa Latina [reported](http://www.plenglish.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2604031&Itemid=1) on Tuesday.

U.N. officials are said to have “listened to the statements of Iran, who rejects Washington’s decision of denying visa to the Persian ambassador under the pretext of Aboutalebi’s alleged participation in the storming of the U.S. embassy in Tehran in 1979,” according to the report.

Aboutalebi, Iran’s former ambassador to Australia, continues to maintain that he played only a minor role in the hostage situation.

Iran’s allies petitioned U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon earlier this month over the U.S. refusal to grant Aboutalebi a visa.

“This decision of the U.S. government has indeed negative implications for multilateral diplomacy and will create a dangerous precedence and affect adversely the work of intergovernmental organizations and activities of their member-states,” read a [letter](http://iran-un.org/en/2014/04/14/14-april-2014/) submitted to the U.N. by Cyprus.

“The Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran requests that the Committee addresses this issue in an extraordinary and urgent manner,” the letter stated.

Iran went on to express “its serious concern over the clear indication of refusal of granting visa by the host country authorities in breach of their legal obligations under international law and the headquarters agreement,” according to the letter.

“The denial of visa to a representative of a U.N. member-state is in contravention of the principles of international law and the United Nations Charter including the principles of sovereign equality of states and respect for their sovereignty and political independence,” it stated.

The U.N. Committee on Relations with the Host Country took up the issue during a closed session Tuesday. The meeting is scheduled to run from 3:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m.

The relations committee was established in 1971 to deal with conflicts between the U.N.’s host nation and other countries. It is comprised of 19 nations, including the United States, China, Iraq, Libya, and Russia, among others.

The relations committee is not bound by U.S. law and can advise the United States on issues. It also can make recommendations on resolutions that should be taken up by the General Assembly.

While U.S. law, such as the new bill banning terrorist ambassadors, governs the United States, the U.N. can instruct the United States on some visa issues, [according](http://usun.state.gov/documents/organization/223181.pdf) to the committee’s mandate.

A spokesman for the U.S. Mission to the U.N. did not respond to a request for comment on the meeting.

However, U.S. officials are expected to maintain their opposition to Aboutalibi.