

We've Reached a 'Nuclear Framework' with Iran. So Now What?

by [Dennis Ross \(/experts/dennis-ross\)](#)

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No negotiations with the Iranians are easy. The difficulty in producing the framework understanding is a reminder that filling in the details will also prove to be an ordeal. While the framework includes important limitations on the Iranian program, the Iranians will resist the scope of the verification that the Obama administration will need in a final deal.

And that is key. By making the central measure by which to judge the effectiveness of the deal a one-year breakout time, the administration has made verification the most important part of the agreement. It must be in a position to show that it can detect what the Iranians are doing, when they are doing it. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors must have access to declared and undeclared sites -- even if it is at a military or Revolutionary Guard facility. Will the Iranians permit that? Will we have the same understanding of what the verification regime requires? I suspect that will be a difficult issue to resolve.

The tension between our need to show that Iran's capabilities have been constrained and the Iranian desire to show that it will be treated like any other member of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty will bedevil the talks until the end. But that is to be expected in a negotiation that is about limiting Iran's capabilities and not being able to show that the intent of the Iranian nuclear program has changed.

[To read other contributions to this roundtable on the Iran deal, go to the *Washington Post* website \(\[http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2015/04/02/9e82019a-d4d3-11e4-8fce-3941fc548f1c_story.html\]\(http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2015/04/02/9e82019a-d4d3-11e4-8fce-3941fc548f1c_story.html\)\).](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2015/04/02/9e82019a-d4d3-11e4-8fce-3941fc548f1c_story.html) ❖

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