

January 15, 2025

Klaus Schwab
Founder and Chairman of the Board of Trustees
Børge Brende
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World Economic Forum
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Switzerland
By email: klaus.schwab@weforum.org; borge.brende@weforum.org

Re: Abbas Araghchi's Participation at the World Economic Forum

Dear Dr. Schwab and Mr. Brende:

On behalf of United Against Nuclear Iran (“UANI”¹), I am writing to urge you to rescind an invitation to Iranian officials, including the Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Abbas Araghchi, to visit Switzerland to participate in the 2025 World Economic Forum at Davos. Iran’s Foreign Ministry has reported that the World Economic Forum issued an invitation to Araghchi for your annual meeting in January.²

Abbas Araghchi is a long-time affiliate of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps’ (IRGC) Quds Force, a U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organization responsible for orchestrating acts of terrorism across the globe.³ The IRGC provides direct support to the military arms of Hezbollah and Hamas—both considered terrorist organizations by the United States and the European Union—and employs brutal methods, including mass executions, beatings, and rape, to crush dissent within Iran and destabilize the Middle East and beyond. Araghchi has proudly and openly admitted his allegiance to these efforts, at one point telling other IRGC members that, “the same IRGC commander who dressed you in IRGC uniform and gave you a weapon has also given me a suit and collared shirt and given me a political mission.”⁴ This is not a man of diplomacy, but a loyal operative of a regime that weaponizes terror and wields violence as state policy. Just as the World Economic Forum does not extend invitations to leaders of Al-Qaeda and ISIS, the Islamic Republic should be afforded similar treatment.

As you know, the atrocities of October 7, where Hamas perpetrated the worst massacre of the Jewish people since the Holocaust, remain seared into the world’s collective memory. Women were raped, children were murdered, entire families were butchered, and civilians were burned

¹ United Against Nuclear Iran, “[About](#).”

² Islamic Republic of Iran Foreign Ministry, “[Iran FM Invited to Davos Meeting of 2025](#),” September 28, 2024.

³ Tehran Times, “[Araghchi hailed as former member of IRGC](#),” August 12, 2024.

⁴ Didban Iran, “[Abbas Araghchi](#),” January 3, 2024.

alive.⁵ On October 8, Hezbollah joined in, firing missiles and escalating the carnage. Iran celebrated these heinous crimes. Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei declared, “We kiss the hands of those who planned the attack on the Zionist regime.”⁶ Abbas Araghchi, in turn, has described terrorists like Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh and Hezbollah figurehead Hassan Nasrallah as “honorable martyrs.”⁷ This language is deeply offensive and would be wholly inappropriate to platform at a conference whose theme this year is “Collaboration for the Intelligent Age.”

Switzerland and the World Economic Forum would never consider inviting Hamas leadership to Davos. By the same token, it is grossly unacceptable to extend the same courtesy to their principal sponsor, Iran, which finances Hamas with over \$350 million annually and enables Hezbollah militants to carry out their campaigns of terror and indiscriminate violence.⁸ Iran also supports the Houthi rebels, providing arms shipments, funding, and military training through the IRGC. This support has emboldened the Houthis to carry out audacious attacks on commercial ships in the Red Sea, targeting international commerce with drones and missiles. These actions have disrupted global maritime trade, endangered critical shipping routes, and imposed economic hardship on Europe and beyond, with Iran’s backing sustaining and amplifying this campaign of destabilization. It is unconscionable and indefensible to grant Araghchi an invitation to participate at Davos to spew propaganda on behalf of a regime that has no legitimacy at home, and sows chaos across the globe through its network of proxy terrorism and violent subjugation.

Meanwhile, while Europe is expending large sums of financial and defensive resources to defend Ukrainian sovereignty against Russian aggression, Iran is deepening its alliance with Moscow by signing a comprehensive defense pact, further entrenching its cooperation with a regime actively undermining European security and global stability.⁹ Inviting Araghchi would embolden the Iranian regime, as it signals a tacit acceptance of such brazen actions, ultimately encouraging further Iranian-Russian military cooperation against Europe.

Iran’s egregious behavior has not ended there. Last week, a Swiss national died under suspicious circumstances while in Iranian custody.¹⁰ Germany recently condemned Iran for its barbaric execution of Jamshid Sharmahd, a German citizen who was abducted, tortured, and forced into a sham trial by Iran.¹¹ Italy faced a similar affront in recent weeks when Iranian authorities detained journalist Cecilia Sala, using her as leverage in geopolitical blackmail.¹² Iran continues to use foreign nationals as hostages, turning diplomacy into an instrument of extortion and violating every principle of international law.

⁵ New York Times, “[Screams Without Words: How Hamas Weaponized Sexual Violence on Oct. 7](#),” December 28, 2023.

⁶ Reuters, “[Iran’s Khamenei says Tehran was not behind Hamas attack on Israel](#),” October 10, 2023.

⁷ Iran MFA, “[Iranian FM meets Hezbollah representative in Tehran](#),” October 1, 2024.

⁸ Reuters, “[How Hamas Secretly Built a “Mini Army” to Fight Israel](#),” October 16, 2023.

⁹ ABC News, “[Russia says Iran’s president will visit this week, sign a partnership pact with Putin](#),” January 13, 2025.

¹⁰ Reuters, “[Switzerland seeks answers from Iran after traveller dies in prison](#),” January 10, 2025.

¹¹ DW News, “[Germany outraged over Jamshid Sharmahd’s execution in Iran](#),” October 29, 2024.

¹² NPR, “[Italy summons Iranian ambassador to demand release of journalist Cecilia Sala](#),” January 2, 2025.

Moreover, Iran has unleashed a chilling new tactic across Europe—recruiting children to attack Jewish and Israeli targets. Teenagers have been caught planting explosives and carrying out shootings in Sweden, Belgium, and Norway.¹³ The regime preys on the desperation of young migrants, exploiting their vulnerability for its campaigns of terror. At the same time, Iran uses organized crime networks to expand its reach, hiring criminals to conduct surveillance, assassinations, and bombings. These are deliberate strategies designed to spread fear and chaos while shielding Iran from direct accountability.

At a time when the Iranian people are courageously standing up to their oppressive regime through the 'Women, Life, Freedom' movement, Abbas Araghchi's presence at Davos sends a dangerous message. It tells the victims of the Iranian regime—political prisoners, dissidents, journalists, and innocent civilians—that their suffering is secondary to a facade of diplomacy. It tells the attending partners of the World Economic Forum that their brands are being associated with a regime that funds and celebrates terrorism. It signals that while the forum claims to champion trust and resilience, it is also willing to entertain emissaries of a government that sows division, destruction, and despair.

It is categorically inappropriate for a regime actively orchestrating attacks on European soil to be granted a platform at Davos. Allowing Abbas Araghchi or another Iranian official to attend the forum now would represent a betrayal to those who continue to stand against tyranny and terrorism.

I strongly urge you to uphold the integrity of the World Economic Forum and its mission by denying Abbas Araghchi or any representative of the Islamic Republic the privilege of participation. His presence at Davos would not foster dialogue or trust, but embolden a regime that thrives on deceit and destruction. The credibility of the forum and the values it seeks to advance demand that such voices be excluded.

Very truly yours,



Ambassador Mark D. Wallace

UANI is a not-for-profit, bi-partisan, advocacy group that seeks to prevent Iran from fulfilling its ambition to obtain nuclear weapons. UANI was founded in 2008 by Ambassador Mark D. Wallace, the late Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, and Middle East expert Dennis Ross. UANI's private sanctions campaigns and state and federal legislative initiatives focus on ending the economic and financial support of the Iranian regime by corporations until Iran verifiably abandons its drive for nuclear weapons, support for terrorism and gross human rights violations. Advisory Board consists of distinguished leaders in government, academia and business. See www.unitedagainstanucleariran.com/about/leadership.

¹³ Bloomberg, "[Iran Is Hiring Children to Attack Israeli Targets in Europe](#)," December 21, 2024.