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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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# Anthropologists Oppose US Military Action Against Iran: New Resolution Passed by American Anthropological Association

The American Anthropological Association—the world's largest professional association of anthropologists—has come together to voice opposition to U.S. military actions against Iran, and to deny assertions that Iranian government is an aid to terrorists and Shiite fighters or developing nuclear weapons.

During a business meeting held on November 29 at the Association's 106<sup>th</sup> annual meeting in Washington DC, over 250 anthropologists were present to vote in favor of a resolution to oppose all U.S. military action against Iran. The resolution, which was submitted by Roberto Gonzalez of San Jose State University and William Beeman of the University of Minnesota, urges President George W. Bush and members of US Congress to:

- Refrain from using covert or overt military action (including air strikes) against the country or government of Iran
- Refrain from authorizing the President to use such military action
- Cease all public relations campaigns designed to convince the US public to support military action against Iran
- Work with allied countries to find a peaceful and diplomatic solution to resolving differences with Iran.

The AAA resolution was passed several days before US intelligence released a report indicating that Iran is not pursuing a nuclear weapons program. In accord with this report, the AAA resolution cites similar assertions from the International Atomic Energy Agency that Iran is not developing nuclear weapons. The resolution also indicates that the Iranian government has not shipped weapons to Taliban insurgents or Shiite fighters in Iraq, nor offered support for Al Qaeda or the Taliban.

"As anthropologists, we further have the duty to protect both the people we study and the integrity of our status as researchers. A baseless and unwarranted attack against Iran by the American government would endanger both. It would create catastrophic tragedy for millions of people and foster a hostile climate for our academic work all over the planet," said resolution sponsor William Beeman.

The Iran resolution emerged against a backdrop of heated debate at the Association's annual meeting about anthropologists who work with US Military and Intelligence agencies. On Wednesday evening of the Annual Meeting, an ad hoc commission of the AAA released a [report](#) on the ethics of engagement with these communities. Last month, the Association also issued a [statement](#) opposing the US Military's Human Terrain System (HTS) project which embeds anthropologists in US military teams in Iraq and Afghanistan.



As the second consecutive quorum present in the past thirty years at the AAA's business meeting, the passage of this year's resolution on Iran marks an expansion of membership engagement in public policy advocacy, spurred by discontent with aspects of U.S. foreign policy. Last year, two resolutions—on Iraq and torture—were passed at the AAA business meeting and adopted by the membership as Association policy.

"The engagement of AAA members with important political and cultural issues, including the involvement of the US military in the Middle East, is a sign of the relevance and vibrancy of anthropology today," said ex-officio AAA president Alan Goodman, who presided over this year's business meeting.

Pursuant to AAA bylaws, the Iran resolution will be sent out by email ballot and voted on by AAA membership in May 2008. Should a majority of members vote in favor of the resolution, it will become official AAA policy. Results of the vote will be posted on the AAA Web site ([www.aaanet.org](http://www.aaanet.org)) in June 2008.

Other resolutions discussed at the AAA business meeting—which were not submitted at least 30 days before the meeting—will be issued to the AAA executive board as advisory. These include a resolution on U.S. Census language classifications, a resolution to create a task force to study rising global food prices, and a resolution to reinstate sections of the AAA's 1971 Code of Ethics.

For text of the resolution on Iran, click [here](#).

*Founded in 1902, the American Anthropological Association is the world's largest professional organization of anthropologists and others interested in anthropology, with an average annual membership of more than 10,000. The Arlington, Va.-based association represents all specialties within anthropology — cultural anthropology, biological (or physical) anthropology, archaeology, linguistics and applied anthropology.*

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