

## *Israel's Useful Idiot*

# **Talks With Iran a 'Foolish Waste of Time': US Lawmaker**

**By AFP**

January 19, 2012 "The Daily Star" -- WASHINGTON, Jan 18, 2012 (AFP) - The hawkish chairwoman of the House Foreign Affairs committee warned the Obama administration on Wednesday against embarking on talks with Iran about its nuclear program -- an endeavor she said would be a "foolish waste of time."

Fresh from a congressional trip to the Middle East, US lawmaker Ileana Ros-Lehtinen expressed concern that Middle Eastern officials whom she and other members of her congressional delegation met with seemed to think that talks between Washington and Tehran were likely.

"The folks we met with seem to think that the United States is on the verge of once again conversing with Iran," the Florida congresswoman said.

"I certainly hope we're not going to do that foolish venture again."

Ros-Lehtinen made her remarks as Turkey's foreign minister Ahmet Davutoglu said during a visit to NATO headquarters Wednesday that both Iran and global powers were ready and willing to restart talks on Tehran's controversial nuclear program.

There were varying views, however, on how likely such a dialogue actually is.

Officials from the European Union said there has been no progress toward talks, even as Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi said during a visit to Turkey Wednesday that the next round of talks would probably be in Istanbul and that a date would be set in the near future, Turkish media reported.

Davutoglu is to meet Salehi on Thursday and join EU foreign ministers for talks on Monday that will touch both on Iran and Syria.

Ros-Lehtinen was adamant, however, that any dialogue with Iran would be fruitless.

"I don't know what the administration is going to do, but that would be very foolish of them to sit down and negotiate with them," and said a much more appropriate course of action would be to speed passage of sanctions legislation.

"We just need to pass the (sanctions) bill," Ros-Lehtinen told reporters as she exited a meeting with Jordan's King Abdullah II, who is visiting Washington.

"I absolutely, unequivocally, very clearly and directly oppose any kind of talks with Iran," the lawmaker added.