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Public Release Date: Monday, October 15th, 2012, 6:00 AM EDT

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Toronto, ON – In response to Israel's public discussions about the possibility of launching a pre-emptive strike against Iran's nuclear-enrichment program, a new Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of the Munk Debate has revealed that a majority (59%) of Americans would 'support' (25% strongly/34% somewhat) the United States of America participating in a pre-emptive strike against Iran's nuclear enrichment program, while four in ten (42%) 'oppose' (16% strongly/26% somewhat) such a strike.

Conversely, four in ten (41%) Canadians 'support' (12% strongly/29% somewhat) Canada participating in a pre-emptive strike against Iran's nuclear-enrichment facilities, while a majority (59%) 'opposes' (29% strongly/30% somewhat) this type of action against Iran.. It is interesting to note, however, that there still exists a significant amount of support in Canada for a military strike, considering Canada's recent withdrawal from combat in Afghanistan and its solid opposition towards the military campaign in Iraq.

Today, the Munk Debates announced that Iran's nuclear ambitions would be the topic for its tenth semi-annual event, to be held in Toronto on Monday, November 26th.

CNN's Fareed Zakaria and Middle East scholar and former diplomat Vali Nasr will argue *against* the debate motion "the world cannot tolerate an Iran with nuclear weapons capability". Their opponents will be columnist Charles Krauthammer and former head of Israeli military intelligence Amos Yadlin. – more information at www.munkdebates.com.

The survey data also reveal that the importance of dealing with the threat of a nuclear-armed Iran appears near the top of the list of possible global threats, with both Americans (#2) and Canadians (#3) placing it near the top. Below are the Canadian rankings, compared with the American rankings:

Canadian Rankings - Total (extremely important/somewhat important)	**American Rankings** – Total (extremely important/somewhat important)
1. International terrorism – 91% (55%/36%)	1. International terrorism – 94% (68%/26%)
2. Famine and food shortage – 90% (51%/38%)	2. Nuclear-armed Iran - 90% (61%/29%)
3. Nuclear-armed Iran – 87% (54%/34%)	3. Cyber attacks – 88% (44%/44%)
4. Human trafficking – 87% (53%/34%)	4. Famine and food shortage – 87% (49%/38%)
5. Global pandemics – 85% (41%/44%)	5. Nuclear-armed North Korea – 86% (51%/35%)
6. Climate change – 85% (45%/40%)	6. Human trafficking – 86% (49%/38%)
7. Nuclear-armed North Korea – 84% (48%/35%)	7. Global pandemics – 82% (36%/46%)
8. Cyber attacks – 83% (35%/48%)	8. Illegal drugs – 81% (46%/36%)
9. Illegal drugs – 81% (39%/42%)	9. Climate change – 71% (34%/37%)

To this point, both Canadians and Americans generally feel that the level and quality of public debate around Iran and its nuclear-enrichment program are both wanting:

- Both Canadians and Americans agree that the debate thus far has been more one-sided than fair and balanced: Americans (57% one-sided vs. 43% fair and balanced); Canadians (60% one-sided vs. 40% fair and balanced).

- Canadians are more likely than Americans to believe that the level of debate thus far is of low quality: Canadians (62% of low quality vs. 38% of high quality); Americans (54% of low quality vs. 46% of high quality).

- They both agree that the debate has been more rooted in fear than fact: Canadians (58% rooted in fear vs. 42% rooted in fact); Americans (55% rooted in fear vs. 45% rooted in fact).

- Canadians and Americans are more split on whether the debate thus far has been knowledgeable and informed or sensationalist. Americans are slightly more likely to believe that the debate is knowledgeable and informed, while more Canadians believe the debate has been sensationalist: Americans (53% knowledgeable and informed vs. 47% sensationalist); Canadians (53% sensationalist vs. 47% knowledgeable and informed).

Adopting Position of Pre-Emptive Strike Against Iran Doesn't Boost Either Presidential Candidate's Fortunes…

Today's poll, released a day before the second presidential debate in Hempstead, N.Y., reveals that neither presidential candidate has much to gain if, as part of their campaign, they adopted a "redline" where the US would undertake pre-emptive military action against Iran's nuclear-enrichment program should the Iranian government develop the *capability* to build a nuclear weapon. Two in ten (21%) Americans say they would be 'more likely' to vote for Democratic Candidate President Barack Obama if he adopted this position, compared to 27% who would be 'less likely' to vote for him as a result, while 52% say there would be no change in their likelihood to vote for him. This results in a net score of -6 percentage points.

For Republican Candidate Mitt Romney the divide is less pronounced, but still has a net negative effect. One quarter (24%) say they would be 'more likely' to vote for him if he adopted this position, compared to 26% who claim that they would be 'less likely' to vote for Romney as a result. Half (50%) say that their likelihood of voting for Romney wouldn't change if he adopted this position.

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted between October 2nd to 5th, 2012 in Canada and October 2nd to 7th, 2012 in the United States on behalf of the Munk Debates. For this survey, a sample of 1,007 Canadians and 1,002 Americans from Ipsos' online panels was interviewed online. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population in both countries according to their Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. The precision of Ipsos online polls are calculated using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to +/- 3.5 percentage points of all Americans and Canadians in their respective general populations. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error. For more information on credibility intervals, please visit the Ipsos website at http://ipsos-na.com/dl/pdf/research/public-affairs/IpsosPA_CredibilityIntervals.pdf

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How to Calculate Bayesian Credibility Intervals

The calculation of credibility intervals assumes that Y has a binomial distribution conditioned on the parameter θ\, i.e., Y|θ~Bin(n,θ), where n is the size of our sample. In this setting, Y counts the number of "yes", or "1", observed in the sample, so that the sample mean ($\bar{y}$) is a natural estimate of the true population proportion θ. This model is often called the likelihood function, and it is a standard concept in both the Bayesian and the Classical framework. The Bayesian[1] statistics combines both the prior distribution and the likelihood function to create a posterior distribution. The posterior distribution represents our opinion about which are the plausible values for θ adjusted after observing the sample data. In reality, the posterior distribution is one's knowledge base updated using the latest survey information. For the prior and likelihood functions specified here, the posterior distribution is also a beta distribution (π(θ/y)~β(y+a,n-y+b)), but with updated hyper-parameters.

Our credibility interval for θ is based on this posterior distribution. As mentioned above, these intervals represent our belief about which are the most plausible values for θ given our updated knowledge base. There are different ways to calculate these intervals based on $\pi(\theta/y)$. Since we want only one measure of precision for all variables in the survey, analogous to what is done within the Classical framework, we will compute the largest possible credibility interval for any observed sample. The worst case occurs when we assume that a=1 and b=1 and $y = n/2$. Using a simple approximation of the posterior by the normal distribution, the 95% credibility interval is given by, approximately:

$$\bar{y} \mp \frac{1}{\sqrt{n}}$$

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[1] *Bayesian Data Analysis, Second Edition, Andrew Gelman, John B. Carlin, Hal S. Stern, Donald B. Rubin, Chapman & Hall/CRC | ISBN: 158488388X | 2003*

For this poll, the Bayesian Credibility Interval was adjusted using standard weighting design effect 1+L=1.3 to account for complex weighting[2]

Examples of credibility intervals for different base sizes are below.

Sample size	Credibility intervals
2,000	2.5
1,500	2.9
1,000	3.5
750	4.1
500	5.0
350	6.0
200	7.9
100	11.2

[2] *Kish, L. (1992). Weighting for unequal Pi . Journal of Official, Statistics, 8, 2, 183200.*