

Iran Deal in Geneva: Hold the Cheers

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

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Region: [Asia](#)

In-depth Report: [IRAN: THE NEXT WAR?](#)

A previous article asked if it matters? Longstanding hardline US/Israeli policy won't change.

Sanctions Iran most wants removed remain in place. Stiff new ones may follow later on. For now they're postponed.

America is duplicitous. It's deals aren't worth the paper they're written on. Will this one be different? Don't bet on it. Interpretations differ on what was agreed on. More on that below.

Obama is no peacemaker. He's waging multiple direct and proxy wars. He's done so from day one in office. He broke every major promise made. That's key.

He shows no signs of changing policy. He hasn't throughout his tenure. He remains hardline on Iran. His softer rhetoric reflects deception. Tehran got too little in exchange for major concessions.

A six month interim deal was agreed on. It's temporary, modest and reversible. It can be changed, rescinded or ignored if Washington wishes.

Iran has no guarantees. It has legitimate demands. It wants its sovereign rights respected.

It wants normalized relations. It wants US/Israeli war options dropped. It wants its membership in the world body of nations fully recognized.

On November 20, talks began. They continued into day five. They concluded pre-dawn on Sunday. A UN Geneva Palace of Nations signing ceremony followed.

- Conflicting reports suggest possible rocky times ahead. [Reuters](#) headlined "Iran, six world powers clinch breakthrough nuclear deal."

It suggested "emerging rapprochement ending a dangerous standoff" in exchange for "limited sanctions relief."

The [New York Times](#) headlined "Accord Reached With Iran to Halt Nuclear Program." It gave readers the wrong impression.

It partly misreported. It's typical NYT. It said the agreement "temporarily freezes Iran's nuclear program."

It "halt(s) much of (it) and rolls some elements back." Readers had to get well into the article for details. Most don't get beyond the first few paragraphs. Initial impressions stick. What follows matters less.

The [Washington Post](#) headlined “Iran, world powers reach historic nuclear deal,” saying:

It “freezes key parts of Iran’s nuclear program in exchange for temporary relief on some economic sanctions Iran (is required) to halt or scale back parts of its nuclear infrastructure.”

The [Wall Street Journal](#) headlined “Major Powers Reach Deal With Iran to Freeze Nuclear Program. (It) ensure(s) the Islamist government doesn’t rush to develop atomic weapons.”

Senator Mark Kirk (R. IL) is one of many sharp congressional Iranian critics. The Journal quoted him saying:

“This deal appears to provide the world’s leading sponsor of terrorism with billions of dollars in exchange for cosmetic concessions.”

John Kerry lied to reporters, saying:

“This first step (agreed on) does not say Iran has the right of enrichment, no matter what interpretative comments are made.”

False! Agreement provisions are discussed below. Enrichment up to 5% is permitted. Kerry knows it. So can everyone reading the document.

On November 20, Senators Bob Casey (D. PA), Charles Schumer (D. NY), Lindsey Graham (R. SC), John McCain (R. AR), and Susan Collins (R. ME) wrote John Kerry. [In part they said:](#)

“We feel strongly that any easing of sanctions along the lines that the P5+1 is reportedly considering should require Iran to roll back its nuclear program more significantly than now envisioned.”

“It is our belief that any interim agreement with the Iranians should bring us closer to our ultimate goal which is Iran without a nuclear weapons capability.”

It should “prevent Tehran from possessing any enrichment or reprocessing capability.”

“(W)e are concerned that the interim agreement would require us to make significant concessions before we see Iran demonstrably commit to moving away from developing a nuclear weapons capability.”

“(W)e must be ever mindful of with whom we are negotiating. Iran has been the largest state sponsor of terrorism for over thirty years; its leaders routinely call for the destruction of Israel; and it arms and finances terrorist groups around the globe.”

Many other Republican and Democrat House and Senate members express similar sentiments. Anti-Iranian hostility is virulent. It’s longstanding. Geneva changes nothing.

Netanyahu’s office called the deal “a bad agreement. It gives Iran exactly what it wants: both substantial easing of sanctions and preservation of the most substantial parts of its nuclear program.”

Separately, Netanyahu told his cabinet ministers the deal is a “historic mistake. Israel is not obligated by this agreement.”

“I want to make clear we will not allow Iran to obtain military nuclear capability.”

“Today the world became a much more dangerous place because the most dangerous regime in the world made a significant step in obtaining the most dangerous weapons in the world.”

Other Israeli hardliners expressed similar comments. Deputy Knesset speaker, Moshe Feiglin, compared Geneva to Munich 1938.

“Any rational person understands that we are in the midst of a process leads to a nuclear-armed Iran,” he claimed.

Things are “much worse than (what) led to the Yom Kippur War,” he added.

Israel is the Middle East’s sole nuclear power. It maintains a formidable arsenal. It has long-range sophisticated delivery systems. It represents the region’s only major threat. Western media entirely ignore it.

Avigdor Lieberman is Israel’s defrocked/reinstated foreign minister. He represents the extreme far right of Netanyahu’s coalition government.

He’s an embarrassment too great to ignore. He’s a thorn in the side of peace and stability.

He warned about letting Iran’s nuclear program continue. It’ll lead to a regional nuclear arms race, he claimed.

It’ll be on a scale “that even the most nightmarish Hollywood horror movie could not come close to depicting.”

“We will know how to handle the Iranian threat, even if we stand alone,” he stressed.

“The threat is not just directed at us. The consequences (will be felt) across the Persian Gulf, Saudi Arabia, and the price of oil and gas. (They’ll) be catastrophic for the whole world.”

Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Ya’alon was just as hardline, saying:

“We must not be patient and allow Iran to become a nuclear state. One way or another, Iran’s military nuclear program must be stopped.”

“We must continue with harsh sanctions on the diplomatic front, while presenting a credible military threat.”

“We stand before a bad deal after which Iran will still be allowed to preserve its enrichment capabilities and operate without pressure.”

“A strengthened Iran is a strengthened Hezbollah and Islamic Jihad. These are groups that present a threat to the West and to us.”

Iranian reports were positive. [Press TV](#) headlined “Tehran, world powers reach nuclear deal: Iran FM.” The Tehran Times headlined “Tehran, world powers reach nuclear deal.”

Iran's [Fars News Agency](#) headlined "FM: Iran to Continue Nuclear Activities." It quoted Foreign Minister Javad Zarif saying:

Iran's "program has been recognized and the Iranian people's right to use the peaceful nuclear technology based on the NPT (Non-Proliferation Treaty) and as an inalienable right has been recognized and countries are necessitated not to create any obstacle on its way."

"The (nuclear) program will continue and all the sanctions and violations against the Iranian nation under the pretext of the nuclear program will be removed gradually."

The deal represents a first-step effort toward "the full removal of all UN Security Council, unilateral and multilateral sanctions, while the country's enrichment program will be maintained."

"Production of 5-percent-enriched uranium will continue in the country similar to the past."

"None of the enrichment centers will be closed and Fordo and Natanz will continue their work and the Arak heavy water program will continue in its present form and no material (enriched uranium stockpiles) will be taken out of the country and all the enriched materials will remain inside the country."

"The current sanctions will move towards decrease. No (new) sanctions will be imposed and Iran's financial resources will return."

Zarif called the deal "a great success." His faith remains to be tested. He understands the challenges Iran face. He called what was agreed on "an action plan in four pages."

"If we see any breach occurs in the commitments of the other side, and I hope that it will not happen, there will be a possibility for reversing (the actions)."

"We are not in such a status to accept implementing the agreement unilaterally, if the other side doesn't comply with its undertakings."

"With open eyes and by fully protecting the people's rights, if, God forbid, we come to this conclusion that the other side has misused the created opportunity, we will surely have other choices."

Fars News published the [full text of the deal](#). It's provisions are as follows:

- its duration runs six months; everything agreed on below remains in place for that period;
- it's renewable by mutual consent;
- Iran retains half of its 20% enriched uranium "as working stock of 20% oxide for fabrication of fuel for the TRR (Tehran Research Reactor);"
- the remainder will be diluted "to no more than 5%;"
- for the next six months, Iran will restrict enrichment to 5%;

- it “will not make any further advances of its activities at (its) Natanz Fuel Enrichment Plant 1, Fordow2, or the Arak reactor 3;”
- no new enrichment locations will be used;
- “Iran will continue its safeguarded R&D practices, including its current R&D practices; (they’re) not designed for accumulation of the enriched uranium;”
- reprocessing or construction of a facility for that purpose is prohibited;
- “enhanced monitoring” is agreed on;
- IAEA-supplied information will include “Iran’s plans for nuclear facilities, a description of each building on each nuclear site, a description of the scale of operations for each location engaged in specified nuclear activities, information on uranium mines and mills, and information on source material;”
- Iran will supply this information within three months;
- it’ll provide IAEA with an updated DIQ (Design Inventory Questionnaire) on Arak’s reactor;
- IAEA steps were agreed on regarding the Safeguards Approach for Arak’s reactor;
- “daily IAEA inspector access when inspectors are not present for the purpose of Design Information Verification, Interim Inventory Verification, Physical Inventory Verification, and unannounced inspections, for the purpose of access to offline surveillance records, at Fordow and Natanz;”
- “IAEA inspector managed access to centrifuge assembly workshops4; centrifuge rotor production workshops and storage facilities; and uranium mines and mills;”
- Iran won’t “feed UF6 (uranium hexafluoride) into the centrifuges installed but not enriching uranium;”
- it won’t install additional centrifuges;
- it will replace existing ones with others “of the same type;”
- no further Fordow enrichment “over 5% at 4 cascades (and no) increase(d) enrichment capacity; (no) feed (of) UF6 into the other 12 cascades (to) remain inoperative; no interconnections between cascades;”
- Iran won’t “commission (Arak) or transfer fuel or heavy water to the reactor site, and will not test additional fuel or produce more fuel for the reactor or install remaining components;” and

- centrifuge production will only replace “damaged machines.”

P5+1 countries agreed to the following:

- cease efforts to further reduce Iranian crude oil sales;
- let Iranian customers continue buying their current amounts;
- repatriate “an agreed amount of revenue held abroad;” it’s believed to be no more than \$7 billion; perhaps it’s less;
- suspend US/EU insurance and transportation services sanctions;
- suspend US/EU sanctions on Iranian petrochemical exports, associated services related to them, gold and precious metals, as well as others on associated services, and Iran’s auto industry plus associated services related to it;
- “license the supply and installation in Iran of spare parts for safety of flight for Iranian civil aviation and associated services;”
- “license safety related inspections and repairs in Iran as well as associated services;”
- no new US, EU or Security Council nuclear related sanctions;
- “establish a financial channel to facilitate humanitarian trade for Iran’s domestic needs using Iranian oil revenues held abroad;”
- included are transactions involving food, agricultural products, medicines, medical devices and supplies, as well as medical expenses incurred abroad;
- “specified foreign banks and non-designated Iranian” ones “to be defined” will be involved when the channel is established;
- it’ll enable Iran to pay its UN obligations, as well as tuition for Iranian students studying abroad “up to an agreed amount;”
- EU authorized transactions thresholds will increase “for non-sanctioned trade to an agreed amount;”
- ” ‘sanctions on associated services’ means any service, such as insurance, transportation, or financial, subject to the underlying US or EU sanctions applicable, insofar as each service is related to the underlying sanction and required to facilitate the desired transactions;”
- “these services could involve any non-designated Iranian entities;”

- final step efforts toward a “comprehensive solution” to be implemented “no more than one year after agreement on the above provisions;”
- it’ll have “a specified long-term duration;”
- it’ll reflect adhering to NPT provisions and IAEA Safeguard Agreements;
- it aims to “comprehensively lift UN Security Council, multilateral and national nuclear-related sanctions, including steps on access in areas of trade, technology, finance, and energy, on a schedule to be agreed upon;”
- it’ll involve a “mutually defined enrichment programme with mutually agreed parameters consistent with practical needs, with agreed limits on scope and level of enrichment activities, capacity, where it is carried out, and stocks of enriched uranium, for a period to be agreed upon;”
- it’ll fully resolve concerns about Arak;
- it’ll mandate “no reprocessing or construction of a facility capable of” doing so;
- “following successful implementation of the final step of the comprehensive solution for its full duration, the Iranian nuclear programme will be treated in the same manner as that of any non-nuclear weapon state party to the NPT;” and
- it’s mutually agreed that “nothing is agreed until everything is agreed.”

Sunday’s agreement leaves important issues unresolved. Key is longstanding US/Israeli hostility.

Iran won’t benefit unless its legitimate rights are respected. They haven’t been for 34 years. Will this time be different?

Will longstanding US imperial policy change? Will Israel’s position soften despite its rhetoric? Will its lobby? Will France, Britain and Germany? Will Saudi Arabia and other Gulf Cooperation Council states?

Believing it requires a giant leap of faith. It’s believing America negotiates fairly. It’s believing it wants peace in our time.

It’s believing Obama intends ending decades of US hostility. It’s believing what won’t happen going forward.

Longstanding US policy remains unchanged. It’s hardline. It’s unrelenting. It wants unchallenged global dominance. It wants pro-Western puppet regimes replacing independent ones.

It’s the oil, stupid. It’s the gas. Iran is rich in both. Washington covets control. It continues going all out to get it. Geneva didn’t change things.

Professor Abbas Edalat founded the Campaign Against Sanctions and Military Intervention in Iran (CASMI). He commented on Geneva, saying:

“Clearly, it would take a long time for the US to gain the trust of Iranian people, and this can only be achieved by recognizing Iran’s rights for a civilian nuclear program including home enrichment of uranium for energy production.”

“Only when the US treats Iran with respect as a sovereign nation, the process of reconciliation and looking forward to mutual cooperation and collaboration in many areas of joint interests can begin.”

Stephen Lendman lives in Chicago. He can be reached at lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net.

His new book is titled “Banker Occupation: Waging Financial War on Humanity.”

<http://www.claritypress.com/LendmanII.html>

Visit his blog site at sjlendman.blogspot.com.

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Articles by: [Stephen Lendman](#)

About the author:

Stephen Lendman lives in Chicago. He can be reached at lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net. His new book as editor and contributor is titled "Flashpoint in Ukraine: US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III."

<http://www.claritypress.com/LendmanIII.html> Visit his blog site at sjlendman.blogspot.com. Listen to cutting-edge discussions with distinguished guests on the Progressive Radio News Hour on the Progressive Radio Network. It airs three times weekly: live on Sundays at 1PM Central time plus two prerecorded archived programs.

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