

# Iran vs. Spineless Europe. How far will US-western Threats Go?

By [Peter Koenig](#)

Global Research, July 12, 2019

Region: [Europe, Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Law and Justice](#), [Oil and Energy](#),  
[US NATO War Agenda](#)

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

*Iran announced the second step in reducing her commitment under the 2015 so-called Nuclear Deal, officially known as The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), by exceeding the limit set by agreement of 3.67% uranium enrichment and 300 kg of enriched uranium accumulation. When asked by the media about his reaction, Trump says, “they know what they are doing” and adds, “they better be careful”. Pompeo warns Iran of “more isolation, more sanctions.”*

Iran waited for 60 weeks, after the US unilaterally withdrew from the deal in May 2018, hoping that the Europeans, the so-called E3 (Germany, France and the UK) would honor their commitment to JCPOA, signed in July 2015 in Vienna, Austria. But to this day, the Europeans cannot bring themselves to detach from the US tyranny of sanctions. So, Iran went ahead with this crucial decision to also step out from the agreement.

Today, RT reports that Iran is forced to step further away from the nuclear deal. Iran is “pushing back against US sanctions and European inaction on trade, Iran is stepping up its uranium enrichment.”

In fact, Iran has already exceeded the 3.67% of enrichment and the 300 kg cap set under the JCPOA. And according to Iran’s deputy foreign minister **Abbas Araghchi**, who spoke to a press conference a few days ago, the enrichment levels would stand at 5 percent for now. Iran would give it another 60 weeks to wait for the European reaction.



Iran’s Foreign Minister, **Javad Zarif**, tweeted that

“All such steps are reversible only through E3 compliance. Having failed to implement their obligations under JCPOA – including after the US withdrawal – EU/E3 should at a minimum politically support Iran’s remedial measures under Para 36 [of the JCPOA], including at the International Atomic Energy

Agency (IAEA).” Mr.Zarif added, “E3 have no pretexts to avoid a firm political stance to preserve JCPOA and counter U.S unilateralism.”

IAEA’s Director General, **Yukiya Amano** has informed the Board of Governors that the Agency verified on 1 July that Iran’s total enriched uranium stockpile exceeded the deal’s limit, and that Iran was in breach of the agreement.

But that is not true. There is no breach. Foreign Minister Zarif, rightly pointed out that Iran’s amassing more enriched uranium than permitted under the deal, was not a violation. Iran was exercising its right to respond to the US unilateral withdrawal from the pact a year ago, to the E3 not honoring their part of the deal, and to Washington’s imposed totally illegal and unjustified punishing sanctions on Tehran.

Zarif confirmed Iran’s action and why, by tweeting,

“We triggered and exhausted para 36 after US withdrawal. Para 36 of the accord illustrates why. We gave E3+2 [also including Russia and China] a few weeks, while reserving our right. We finally took action after 60 weeks. As soon as E3 abide by their obligations, we’ll reverse.”

Mr. Zarif is absolutely right. Here is what the famous para 36 of the JCPOA says:

### **Disputed Resolution Mechanism**

36. If Iran believed that any or all of the E3/EU+3 were not meeting their commitments under this JCPOA, Iran could refer the issue to the Joint Commission for resolution; similarly, if any of the E3/EU+3 believed that Iran was not meeting its commitments under this JCPOA, any of the E3/EU+3 could do the same. The Joint Commission would have 15 days to resolve the issue, unless the time period was extended by consensus. After Joint Commission consideration, any participant could refer the issue to Ministers of Foreign Affairs, if it believed the compliance issue had not been resolved. Ministers would have 15 days to resolve the issue, unless the time period was extended by consensus. After Joint Commission consideration - in parallel with (or in lieu of) review at the Ministerial level - either the complaining participant or the participant whose performance is in question could request that the issue be considered by an Advisory Board, which would consist of three members (one each appointed by the participants in the dispute and a third independent member). The Advisory Board should provide a non-binding opinion on the compliance issue within 15 days. If, after this 30-day process the issue is not resolved, the Joint Commission would consider the opinion of the Advisory Board for no more than 5 days in order to resolve the issue. If the issue still has not been resolved to the satisfaction of the complaining participant, and if the complaining participant deems the issue to constitute significant nonperformance, then that participant could treat the unresolved issue as grounds to cease performing its commitments under this JCPOA in whole or in part and/or notify the UN Security Council that it believes the issue constitutes significant non-performance.

The provocations by the west seem to be inexhaustible. On Thursday, 4 July, the UK, ordered by Washington, has seized an Iranian oil tanker which they suspected of carrying oil for Syria. Al Jazeera reports:

“British Royal Marines, police and customs agents on Thursday [4 July] stopped and seized the Grace 1 vessel in Gibraltar on suspicion it carried Iranian crude oil to Syria in breach of European union sanctions against President Bashar al-Assad’s government.”

Foreign Minister Zarif tweeted that UK’s unlawful seizure of a tanker with Iranian oil is piracy, pure and simple. Iran denied that the tanker was bound for Syria’s Baniyas refinery – which does not even have the capacity for such a super tanker to dock, says Iran’s deputy foreign minister, Abbas Araghchi. He did not elaborate on the final destination of the super tanker.

It is clear, the UK, in connivance with its transatlantic empire, does the bidding for Trump’s warrior team, Bolton and Pompeo. – How much farther will they go, the provocateurs? Do they want to incite war with Iran, a retaliatory action, like Iran seizing a UK tanker in return – so as to ‘justify’ a western, possibly Israeli, aggression on Iran, with a counter attack by Iran, triggering a direct intervention by Washington – of course, in defense of Israel – and a major conflict, possibly nuclear, might erupt?

Iran most likely will not fall into this trap. But the question must be asked, **how far will the US-western threats, sanctions and physical aggressions go?**

This morning, 10 July, RT reports,

“The latest out of Washington is that the US is looking to put together a “coalition” that would “ensure freedom of navigation both in the Straits of Hormuz and Bab al-Mandeb,” as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff **General Joseph Dunford** said on Tuesday. These are the waterways connecting the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman, and the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden, respectively.”

What this “freedom of navigation” means, is outsourcing naval blockade and wester piracy of Iranian oil tankers. And that in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. How deep can you, WEST, fall to go for this kind of high sea crime practiced centuries ago? Your moral and ethical deterioration is accelerating rapidly into a bottomless black hole from where there is no return.

There is no question, that Iran does not seek to become a nuclear power, that was never the intention in the first place as was attested already almost ten years ago by the American 16 foremost intelligence agencies, but Iran wants to use its nuclear power generation capacity more efficiently – and that is their full right, especially if the Nuclear Deal is broken. The saber rattling, fear mongering and sanctions are meant to intimidate and punish Iran for not bending to the tyranny of Washington – mainly changing regime and hand over Iran’s riches to the US-western corporatocracy.

What it boils down to is whether the E3 – Germany, France and the UK – have sufficient backbone to go ahead on their own, honoring the JCPOA accord, and whether they and the European Union as a whole, would be willing and sovereignly capable of defending their companies from US sanctions, if they start trading with Iran. This is the question that many European corporations are already asking, especially European oil corporations.

At one point, there seems to have been political will by Europe to circumvent the US sanctions regime by introducing a special payment method, called the Instrument in

Support of Trade Exchanges (INSTEX) which would allow companies in Europe to do business with Iran outside the US-and dollar-dominated SWIFT payment system. However, this works only, if the EU stands up for their companies defending them from US sanctions. Otherwise, as Pompeo already hinted,

“We will simply sanction all companies that use INSTEX.”

In the long run there are three realities to keep in mind.

First, US sanctions will not go away, unless the rest of the world stands up to the US and sanctions them back, in other words stops trading with the US and uses different payment modes than SWIFT and the US-dollar, for example, local currencies, or yuan and ruble through the Chinese International Payment System (CIPS), or the Russian MIR system (MIR – meaning, *world*, or *peace*), introduced by the Bank of Russia in 2015 and which is also opening up to worldwide use.

Second, it is only a matter of time until the Europeans, either as a union or as individual countries will realize that trading with the East – Russia, China and all of the huge mega-Continent of Eurasia which also includes the Middle East, is the most natural trading that can be. It has existed for thousands of years, before the ascent of the AngloZionist empire, some 300 years ago. There is no division of seas. It is a contiguous landmass. And everybody from other continents is welcome to join, peacefully, without the intention of domination and ransacking natural resources.

Third, this second reality will be enhanced and accelerated by China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), also called the New Silk Road – which makes already significant inroads with peoples connecting infrastructure – roads, railways, maritime routes – plus industry, education, research and cultural connections and bridges along the BRI-routes. BRI will very likely become the future for connecting humanity with equitable socioeconomic development for decades to come.

Therefore, Iran may seriously consider dropping for now her ambition to trade with the west – the west is a sinking ship. And instead look to the East for the future. It may mean temporary losses – yes, but so what – the future is not composed of a pyramid of fake dollar-based instant profit – but of foresight and vision. Iran is on the right track by aspiring and most likely shortly entering the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) as a full-fledged member. But, yes, it means dropping the west for now – until the west sees the light on her own.

\*

Note to readers: please click the share buttons above or below. Forward this article to your email lists. Crosspost on your blog site, internet forums. etc.

*This article was originally published on New Eastern Outlook.*

**Peter Koenig** is an economist and geopolitical analyst. He is also a water resources and environmental specialist. He worked for over 30 years with the World Bank and the World Health Organization around the world in the fields of environment and water. He lectures at universities in the US, Europe and South America. He writes regularly for *Global Research*;

*ICH; RT; Sputnik; PressTV; The 21<sup>st</sup> Century; TeleSUR; The Saker Blog, the New Eastern Outlook (NEO); and other internet sites. He is the author of [Implosion – An Economic Thriller about War, Environmental Destruction and Corporate Greed](#) – fiction based on facts and on 30 years of World Bank experience around the globe. He is also a co-author of [The World Order and Revolution! – Essays from the Resistance](#). He is a Research Associate of the Centre for Research on Globalization.*

The original source of this article is Global Research  
Copyright © [Peter Koenig](#), Global Research, 2019

---

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Peter Koenig](#)

**Disclaimer:** The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)  
[www.globalresearch.ca](http://www.globalresearch.ca) contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)