

Israel Launches Media Blitz Against Iran's New President Hassan Rohani

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

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

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Hassan Rohani is Iran's new president. On June 14, Iranians elected him democratically. He won a clear first round majority. On August 3, he was inaugurated.

Obama failed to congratulate him. He hasn't recognized his legitimacy officially. He's a longtime distinguished leader. He's held numerous high level positions.

He combines diplomacy, political acumen and scholarship. He's called the "Diplomat Sheikh" for good reason.

He urges peace and reconciliation. He promises "government of hope and prudence." He pledged "constructive interaction with the world."

He faces enormous challenges. US/Israeli imperialism matters most. It's lawless. It's belligerent. It's destructive. It's unrelenting.

It targets independent governments. It wants Iranian sovereignty destroyed.

Rohani seeks constructive engagement. He said so publicly. He's a man of his word. He says what he means and means what he says.

He discussed it in a September 19 Washington Post op-ed. A [previous article](#) discussed it. He reached out to America and other Western nations. He did so responsibly.

He's committed to fulfilling his promises to his people, he said. He pledged "constructive engagement" with the world.

Doing so "doesn't mean relinquishing one's rights," he said.

"It means engaging with one's counterparts, on the basis of equal footing and mutual respect, to address shared concerns and achieve shared objectives."

Unilateralism is defeatist. It "glorifies brute force. (It) breeds violence." It fosters "terrorism and extremism." It prevents peace initiatives.

Rohani's approach reflects "constructive interaction." He urged world leaders to pursue "prudent engagement." He prioritizes "constructive dialogue." He does so responsibly.

Israel's going all out to subvert his peace and rapprochement agenda. Doing so reflects longstanding official ruthlessness.

Israeli leaders want all regional rivals removed. They want unchallenged regional dominance. Subversion, targeted assassinations, cyber attacks, and war are commonplace Israeli options.

So is malicious propaganda. Netanyahu responded to Rohani's election derisively. He did so belligerently.

"We cannot accept anything less than the total cessation of all enrichment of nuclear materials at all levels, removal from Iran of all enriched nuclear material, closure of Iran's illicit nuclear facilities," he said.

"Until Iran meets these demands, pressure must be stepped up and Iranian nuclear program must be stopped. Period."

"Iran must abide by the demands of the international community to stop its nuclear program and cease the dissemination of terror throughout the world."

Rohani's "the author of a document," he said. "You could call it talk and enrich. Talk and continue to enrich uranium. For nuclear weapons."

"He wrote this in the book. He said that by calming international community, Iran is able to steadily move forward in its nuclear weapons program. We cannot allow Iran to play this game. We cannot let "Rohani ride out the clock."

Defense Minister Moshe Ya'alon's replicates Netanyahu extremism. "In recent days," said Ya'alon, "the world has again turned its gaze to Tehran."

"We are examining the new developments in Iran in light of the elections results, but are also sober about the ambitions of the Iranian regime to obtain nuclear weapons."

He repeated the canard about Iran seeking Israel's destruction. Its nuclear program continues, he said.

"(I)t's up to Israeli commanders to "prepare (their) subordinates for battle, which may occur at an unknown time, and in unclear circumstances."

Israel's only enemies are ones it creates. Its worst one is itself. Big Lies repeat with disturbing regularity.

Netanyahu's world class thug. He responded to Rohani's latest comments. He did so with derision. "Let us not be fooled by the Iranian president's words of deception," he said.

"The Iranians are creating media spin in order to keep the centrifuges spinning."

"The test is not in Rouhani's words, but in the deeds of the Iranian regime, which continues to vigorously pursue its nuclear program at the same time that Rouhani grants interviews."

Chemi Shalev is a regular Haaretz contributor. He's a former Jerusalem Post correspondent/political analyst. He's a guest US media commentator.

On September 20, he [headlined](#) "Rohani's charm offensive poses difficult challenge for Netanyahu," saying:

His “sophistication coupled with America’s disdain for confrontation begs the question: where is Ahmadinejad when we really need him?”

He’s harder to beat up on than his predecessor.

“Call it a charm offensive, seduction sortie, bewitchment blitz or wooing war, one thing is certain: (Rohani’s) all-out public relations onslaught on American hearts and minds poses unprecedented new challenges for (Netanyahu) and other Israeli policymakers.”

He “unleashed (a) salvo of moderate-sounding, peace-hugging statements on NBC and in the Washington Post.”

His main effort comes this week. He’ll address the General Assembly. He’ll do so in New York. He’ll meet one-on-one with world leaders.

He’ll give interviews. He’ll deliver speeches. He’ll make public appearances. He’ll try “convincing America of Iran’s benevolent policies and benign nuclear plans.”

His candor and effectiveness make Israeli, US and other critics sorely miss his predecessor.

“(H)is resemblance to” Tony Award winning “Mandy Patinkin has already (gone) viral” on Facebook.

He has widespread popular appeal. “And the Syria chemical weapons confrontation may have created the worst of times” in terms of confronting Iran effectively.

However things unfold against Syria, “events of the past two weeks have diluted the credibility of an American military threat against Iran.”

Netanyahu insists it essential. He claims he’s ready to go it alone if Washington balks. He never did before. He won’t now.

His bombast wore thin long ago. Israel faces no existential threat. So-called enemies are ones it creates.

Doing so is reckless, irresponsible and dangerous. Netanyahu is his own worst enemy. Attacking Iran assures retaliation most Israelis fear.

It’ll assure widespread destruction, radiological contamination, and large numbers killed or injured. Netanyahu won’t risk it on his own. He wants Washington in the lead.

US war plans were prepared years ago. Obama’s not ready to launch them. Destroying Syria comes first.

“Perhaps the biggest challenge to overcome is that Americans are in a peace-in-our-time kind of mood,” said Shalev.

Netanyahu heads for New York next week. His mission is selling war. He’ll arrive in the wrong place at the wrong time to do so. It won’t stop him trying anyway.

His belligerent offensive is wearing thin. It remains sinister. It’s disquieting. It threatens world peace.

It includes full-blown efforts to demonize Rohani. He calls efforts to negotiate with him futile. He's a "wolf in sheep's clothing," he says.

He'll have a bomb in six months, he claims. He repeated the Big Lie numerous times before. He's done so knowing Iran's nuclear program is peaceful.

He lies claiming otherwise. So does Obama and other US officials. Falsifying a nuclear threat is red herring cover for longstanding regime change plans.

Last week, Senator Lindsey Graham (R. SC) said he's drafting legislation authorizing Obama to attack Iran. He urges it if negotiations fail to halt its nuclear program.

He's doing so knowing its peaceful. He has other fish to fry. He wants the Islamic Republic destroyed. He's in lockstep with likeminded ideologues.

Obama and Rohani will attend next week's General Assembly's session. According to deputy national security adviser for strategic communication Ben Rhodes:

"There have been some positive developments. But those are clearly not sufficient to meet the concerns of the international community with regards to the nuclear program."

No formal meeting is scheduled. It's uncertain if one will take place.

"It's possible that there could be some interaction at different levels, but there's simply none planned at this moment" Rhodes added.

Perhaps being in the same place at the same time on issues vital to both leaders makes some type interaction irresistible.

If so, it'll be the first US/Iranian top leadership meeting since Shah era harshness ended. Whether it happens remains to be seen.

Rohani declared an end to "zero-sum" politics. "Gone is the age of blood feuds," he said. "World leaders are expected (to turn) threats into opportunities." Handling them diplomatically matters most.

Whatever happens next week requires much more than symbolism, smiles, handshakes and talk. It entails reversing longstanding policy.

It involves what Washington entirely rules out. An uneasy calm before resuming the storm prevails. Tensions again will be stoked.

Pretexts are easy to create. America mastered the art years ago. So did Israel. The [Financial Times](#) said Netanyahu "embraced the role of Cassandra."

He fears Rohani's diplomatic is "weakening US and European resolve to stop his country's nuclear program."

According to Netanyahu, his "goal is reaching a deal" benefitting Iranian policy. He wants one letting him "charge forward quickly towards acquiring a nuclear weapon whenever (he) chooses."

Intelligence Minister Yuval Steinitz added:

He's on a "smiling campaign. If nothing is done, he will smile his way all the way to the bomb."

Both officials know these type claims are false. They worry about Western leaders softening longstanding anti-Iranian policy.

They're concerned about lifting sanctions. According to Israeli national security analyst Yoel Guzansky:

"The problem with sanctions is once you lift them, to put them back is very hard."

In New York, Netanyahu intends going on the warpath. He did so last year. He made a fool of himself before a world audience.

His cartoon bomb went viral. He looked more cartoonish than his prop. One cartoonist showed a picture of Daffy Duck's head exploding. An observer referred to Bibi's "Clint Eastwood chair" moment.

Another compared his explosive to what Warner Bros.' animated character Wile E. Coyote used in Looney Tunes cartoons. A London Guardian commentator said his stunt succeeded but not how he intended.

The New Yorker said "the ridiculous deserves ridicule." His "graphic, which he apparently made at Kinkos, is so ridiculous."

The Wall Street Journal compared him to Krushchev's shoe-banging incident. Perhaps he'll choose more discreet venom this times.

His "red line" bluster wore thin long ago. What's at stake is war or peace. George Clemenceau once said "(w)ar is too important to be left to generals."

In America and Israel, politicians should be excluded from ruling on issues this grave. Nearly always they choose unwisely. Ordinary people are harmed most.

Humanitarian intervention is code language for war on humanity. Responsibility to protect authorizes mass murder and destruction.

Ravaging one country after another is called liberating struggles. Obama and Netanyahu prioritize what demands condemnation.

Propaganda wars precede hot ones. Conflicts and other forms of violence are glorified in the name of peace. Doublespeak mumbo jumbo turns truth on its head.

Big Lies make headlines. They're repeated ad nauseam. Mainstream media regurgitate them. Misinformation, deceit and distortion substitute for truth and full disclosure.

Syria's in the eye of the storm. Rohani's turn awaits. Iran is Washington's main global bete noire. It's Israel's top target. Longstanding regime change plans remain firm.

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.

Listen to cutting-edge discussions with distinguished guests on the Progressive Radio News Hour on the Progressive Radio Network.

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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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