

Sanctions and War Threats directed against the Tehran Government: Who Cares About the Iranian People?

By [Kourosh Ziabari](#)

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The world countries are competing with each other in imposing new financial sanctions against Iran. While the Iranian people still hasn't forgotten the bitter memory of 8-year war with the Baathist Iraq which was masterminded and fostered by the United States and its European allies, new rounds of crippling sanctions directed against the most strategic industries of Iran come after one another in what is claimed to be the international movement of preventing Tehran from acquiring nuclear weapons.

Although the International Atomic Energy Agency and the G5+1 have so far failed to put forward hard evidence that demonstrates the deviation of Iran in its nuclear activities towards military purposes, the fourth round of United Nations Security Council sanctions was agreed on June 9, 2010, targeting a number of Iranian companies and individuals who have allegedly participated in Iran's nuclear and missile program.

The Iranian people still remember the painful days of war with Iraq under the late dictator Saddam Hussein who was armed and equipped by the United States and 14 European countries. The First Persian Gulf War cost the lives of more than 500,000 Iranians and imposed some US \$500 billion damage on Iran.

On June 9, 1992, Ted Koppel reported on ABC's Nightline program that Saddam Hussein received much of its financing, intelligence and military help from the United States and the administration of George H. Bush. In 1982, Iraq was removed from the U.S. list of State Sponsors of Terrorism and this enabled the Reagan Administration to transfer a huge amount of dual-use technology to Iraq. According to a May 1994 report by the U.S. Senate Banking Committee, pathogenic (disease producing), toxigenic (poisonous), and other biological research materials were exported to Iraq [during the 8-year war with Iran] pursuant to application and licensing by the U.S. Department of Commerce.

The United Kingdom, Soviet Union, Netherlands, Italy, France and Germany also played their own role in helping Saddam massacre and slaughter the Iranian people. Britain was said to have exported thiodiglycol (a mustard gas precursor) and thionyl chloride (a nerve gas precursor) to Iraq in 1988 and 1989. France sold first-line Mirage F-1 fighter-bombers to Iraq, as well as providing Super Etendard attack aircraft. Between 1977 and 1987, Paris contracted to sell a total of 133 Mirage F-1 fighters to Iraq. In 1984, Italy's state-owned Agusta helicopter manufacturer sold \$164 million worth of helicopters to Iraq. In early 1987, Moscow delivered a squadron of twenty-four MiG-29 Fulcrums to Baghdad. Soviet Union also helped train the Iraq's infantry and delivered a number of surface-to-air missiles, air-to-air

missiles, helicopters and interceptors to Baghdad.

The erosive war was claimed to be a counterbalance to the post-revolutionary Iran which was experiencing the first years of extrication from the monarchy of a U.S.-backed Shah. It was declared to be a battle against the newly-established government; however, it paralyzed the economy of the country, killed thousands of innocent civilians, immersed the nation into a long period of social crisis and aggravated the daily lives of ordinary people.

Seemingly, the history is being repeated once again. The western leaders send sympathetic messages to the Iranian people and declare that they want the well-being of our nation. They express their understanding of the status of Iranian people and assert that they want to empower the “subjugated” and “oppressed” Iranians. In a March 2010 televised message directed at Iran, the U.S. President Barack Obama stated the willingness of his country to provide the Iranians with the facilities of a more hopeful future. He said that his country believes in the dignity of every human being. He vowed the pursuance of diplomatic efforts to incorporate Iran into the international community and expressed hopes that his country can reach out to the Iranian people in peaceful, constructive ways.

“Our offer of comprehensive diplomatic contacts and dialogue stands,” Mr. Obama said in the video. “Indeed, over the course of the last year, it is the Iranian government that has chosen to isolate itself and to choose a self-defeating focus on the past over a commitment to build a better future.

However, the United States and its European allies, in long with their past trajectory, are recurrently failing to practice what they preach. The financial sanctions which have been imposed on Iran by the UNSC, U.S. and EU tend to worsen the daily life of ordinary Iranians whose are inextricably dependent on the state revenues of oil and gas industry. Already stricken with the consequences of continued domestic failures in economy and growing inflation, the new sanctions will harm the Iranians by doubling the prices and reducing their purchasing power.

The new sanctions against Iran have nothing to do with the government of Iran which the western leaders are entangled in a tedious and uninteresting conflict with. These sanctions, and any kind of unpremeditated actions like this, will only injure the ordinary people of Iran who should suffer from the effects of power game between the governments.

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