

Western Powers and Iran Agree on a Nuclear Deal: Now the Political Drama Begins

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The P5 +1 and Iran agreed to a Nuclear Deal in Geneva. The deal is being viewed as a historic moment in diplomatic relations between the United States and Iran. It is the first phase of a process that will determine how far these new agreements Iran, the United States, France, Great Britain and Israel (who is behind the scenes with Saudi Arabia and U.A.E) will go. Under the agreement, Iran will stop enriching uranium over 5% and dismantle its stockpile of 20% enriched uranium. Iran will also cooperate with the United Nations' International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) with inspections and has agreed to stop construction on its heavy water reactor at the Arak plant. In return, the US will release \$4 billion in Iranian assets seized during previous sanctions. It is a deal that the Israeli government is not comfortable with. Israel wants a better deal that would have Iran completely abandon their nuclear program.

One certainty that you can count on is how much power Israel's lobby in Washington, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) has on the US Congress to reject Iran's nuclear deal when the first phase ends in May 2014. AIPAC has leverage over many key people in congress and even in the Oval office including the current US President Barack Obama. Already both Republicans and Democrats are planning the next set of sanctions on Iran come this December. *"Disappointed"* said Senator Charles Schumer of New York *"because it does not seem proportional. Iran simply freezes its nuclear capabilities while we reduce the sanctions.... This disproportionality...makes it more likely that Democrats and Republicans will join together and pass additional sanctions when we return in December"* NBC News reported.

President Obama warned against new sanctions when he said *"now is not the time to move forward on new sanctions, because doing so would derail this promising first step, alienate us from our allies and risk unraveling the coalition that enabled our sanctions to be enforced in the first place"* But the Senate Relations Committee chairman Robert Menendez of New Jersey said that the agreement would *"provide for a six month window to reach a final agreement before imposing new sanctions on Iran,"* even though sanctions would be *"immediately available should the talks falter or Iran fail to implement or breach the interim agreement"* in a statement.

NBC news also reported what house speaker John Boehner said on Sunday after the deal was reached, he said that *"we will look back on the interim deal as a remarkably clever Iranian move to dismantle the international sanctions regime"* unless the Obama Administration dismantles its nuclear program in it's entirely according to Boehner. There are several politicians in Washington that has introduced legislation concerning Israel's security. One of the most vocal advocates for Israel in congress is the U.S. House of

Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, a Republican from Florida who introduced a bill to congress called the '*The United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2013 (H.R. 938 and S. 462)*' that clearly states:

The United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2013 seeks to dramatically strengthen the relationship between the two allies as they work to confront new threats and challenges in the Middle East.

The legislation—co-sponsored by Reps. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL) and Ted Deutch (D-FL) in the House and by Sens. Barbara Boxer (D-CA) and Roy Blunt (R-MO) in the Senate—declares that Israel is a “major strategic partner” of the United States. This designation lays the foundation for expanded U.S.-Israel cooperation in a wide variety of spheres, including defense, intelligence, homeland security, energy, science and trade.

Key Provisions:

- *Declares that Israel is a “major strategic partner” of the United States*
- *Expands authority for forward-deployed U.S. weapons stockpiles in Israel, providing important military equipment for either to use in a crisis*
- *Encourages the president to transfer essential military equipment to Israel to meet current and projected strategic threats*
- *Seeks to find ways for Israel to join the Visa Waiver Program—eliminating the requirement for Israelis and Americans to acquire tourist visas to visit either country*
- *Authorizes the president to provide assistance to Israel promoting cooperation in such fields as energy, water, homeland security, and agriculture*
- *Encourages the enhancement of scientific cooperation and collaboration between the two countries*
- *Encourages continued American assistance for the Iron Dome rocket defense system*

Not surprising that Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen would propose a bill that would give the Israeli state a blank check with American tax dollars. American society cannot continue to support Israel especially with a \$17+ trillion debt crises looming. The US government cannot even afford to repay its creditors, but Israel is seems to be a top priority for funding its military. She is the same person that stated in 2011 to Haaretz, an Israel's daily newspaper concerning Palestinian Statehood which she opposed:

“Our executive branch goes along, pays billions to the UN, so the UN has zero incentive to reform. We should shift UN funding to a voluntary basis, because smart withholding the funds works,” she said. The threat to cut financial aid to the Palestinians, despite the Administration’s objections, makes perfect sense, Ros-Lehtinen added.

“We need to stop Abu-Mazen’s dangerous scheme.

I hope that the U.S. Congress takes a very forceful stand against this statehood issue. It’s time to tell the Palestinians: If you are going with this statehood issue and it is granted, then the U.S. must cut funding to the Palestinians. We gave them billions of dollars these past years, but is Israel safer because of this money going to the Palestinian Authority?” Is she not concerned that if the U.S. withdraws funds, the

vacuum will be filled by countries such as Iran and Saudi Arabia? "Of course these countries can always try to fill the vacuum, but at least we won't be part of the problem, and if we fund this scheme, we are part of the problem, we are funding a sworn enemy of the State of Israel, and I don't want our tax dollars to do that," she says.

The Obama Administration and the US Congress will have members for and against sanctions on Iran. The American-Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) will push for sanctions on Iran. AIPAC has made numerous contributions to many Republican and Democrat pro-Israel politicians in Washington that include Senators John McCain who received \$750,368, Carl Levin (\$366,378), Harry Reid (\$179,640) and Robert Menéndez (\$219,135). In the US House of Representatives Mark Kirk (\$458,979), Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (\$141,507), Eric Cantor (\$119,350) and Nancy Pelosi (\$83,400). The next 6-months of the Iranian nuclear deal will be a marked with accusations against Iran that they are not complying by the rules the deal originally had. AIPAC and its US Congress members on its payroll will do what it takes to let the nuclear deal fail. The US Congress is bought and paid for by AIPAC as is the Obama Administration. Both are under Israel's political control. In 'The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy 'by John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt a New York Times bestseller describe AIPAC's enormous influence on the US Congress:

A key pillar of the Lobby's effectiveness is its influence in the U.S. Congress, where Israel is virtually immune from criticism. This is in itself a remarkable situation, because Congress almost never shies away from contentious issues. Whether the issue is abortion, affirmative action, health care, or welfare, there is certain to be a lively debate on Capitol Hill. Where Israel is concerned, however, potential critics fall silent and there is hardly any debate at all.

One reason for the Lobby's success with Congress is that some key members are Christian Zionists like Dick Armey, who said in September 2002 that "My No. 1 priority in foreign policy is to protect Israel." One would think that the number 1 priority for any congressman would be to "protect America," but that is not what Armey said. There are also Jewish senators and congressmen who work to make U.S. foreign policy support Israel's interests. Pro-Israel congressional staffers are another source of the Lobby's power. As Morris Amitay, a former head of AIPAC, once admitted, "There are a lot of guys at the working level up here [on Capitol Hill] ... who happen to be Jewish, who are willing ... to look at certain issues in terms of their Jewishness These are all guys who are in a position to make the decision in these areas for those senators You can get an awful lot done just at the staff level."

It is AIPAC itself, however, that forms the core of the Lobby's influence in Congress. AIPAC's success is due to its ability to reward legislators and congressional candidates who support its agenda, and to punish those who challenge it. Money is critical to U.S. elections (as the recent scandal over lobbyist Jack Abramoff's various shady dealings reminds us), and AIPAC makes sure that its friends get strong financial support from the myriad pro-Israel political action committees. Those seen as hostile to Israel, on the other hand, can be sure that AIPAC will direct campaign contributions to their political opponents. AIPAC also organizes letter-writing campaigns and encourages newspaper editors to endorse pro-Israel candidates.

US Congress will push forward with sanctions in the coming months. Israeli Prime Minister

Benjamin Netanyahu will continue to threaten Iran with a military strike while the Obama administration continues its harshest sanctions until the Iranian people become disenchanted with the new government of Hassan Rouhani. I wrote an article earlier this year titled 'New Economic Sanctions on Iran, Washington's Regime Change Strategy' on one of the reasons why the US government imposed sanctions on Iran:

Obama is following the same strategy as previous US administrations, and that is to create economic difficulties for the Iranian people with the hope that they would overthrow their government. It is intended to create "Regime Change".

President Obama spoke at the White House Dining room after the deal. One interesting part of the speech is to continue Washington's harsh sanctions on the Iranian people. He said:

On our side, the United States and our friends and allies have agreed to provide Iran with modest relief, while continuing to apply our toughest sanctions. We will refrain from imposing new sanctions, and we will allow the Iranian government access to a portion of the revenue that they have been denied through sanctions. But the broader architecture of sanctions will remain in place and we will continue to enforce them vigorously. And if Iran does not fully meet its commitments during this six-month phase, we will turn off the relief and ratchet up the pressure

Prepare for a long 6 months ahead. Israel will try to disrupt Iran's nuclear deal at any cost. Iran will be accused of not following the conditions of the deal. Washington will seed to Israel's demands until Iran dismantles its nuclear program and submits to Israel's dominance in the Middle East. AIPAC controls the US Congress and the US presidency, make no mistake about that. Many of Obama's supporters believe that Obama is trying diplomacy, a road to peace. But this is the same president that almost launched a war against Syria and is continuing his drone strike policies at unprecedented levels. Remember the US and Israel are staunch allies to say the least, regardless of what the American Main Stream Media outlets say about the so-called "difficult" relationship between Obama and Netanyahu. After all Obama declared America's commitment to Israel's security last March when he visited the country and said "I see this visit as an opportunity to reaffirm the unbreakable bond between our nations, to restate America's unwavering commitment to Israel's security and to speak directly to the people of Israel and to your neighbours." The question people should be asking is what is Washington's next move?

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