



Fact Sheets of Iran-US Standoff:

Key Reasons against Sanctions and Military Intervention in Iran

Introduction

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The current US stand-off against Iran, like the run-up to the invasion of Iraq in 2003, was instigated by the neoconservatives of the Bush Administration based on their doctrine of “*maintaining US pre-eminence, thwarting rival powers and shaping the global security system according to US interests*” [1]. In the case of Saddam’s regime, its fictitious Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and its alleged links to Al-Qaida were used in the US propaganda war to first impose UN sanctions and eventually invade Iraq for a regime change. We now have a déjà vu situation in which the US and its allies, prodded by Israel, demonize Iran as a threat to world security and accuse it of having a nuclear weaponisation programme. The same Israeli lobby and “hawks” who pushed for the invasion of Iraq under the Neo-Conservative Bush administration, are now succeeding in browbeating Obama administration on to the path of most crushing sanctions and military attack on Iran.

As in the case of Iraq, the UN Security Council Resolutions and sanctions against Iran, extricated through massive US pressure, are meant to provide a veneer of legitimacy for such an attack. The biased and politicized November 2011 report of the International Atomic Energy Agency - whose decisions are manipulated by political and economic pressures from the US and its allies in the agency, and its current Head, Yokio Amano, has been exposed as a staunch ally of the US - serves the same purpose. As in the case of Iraq, the real aim is a regime change in Iran for setting up a US puppet government in this oil and gas rich country in the key strategic Persian Gulf region. This is what also happened in the 1953 US-British coup against the nationalist government of Dr Mohammad Mossadegh in Iran, which followed western sanctions and an oil embargo against the country. No lie and distortion of the truth and no act of manipulation, coercion and aggression is spared by Israel, the US and their allies to achieve their goals.

Contrary to the myth propagated through the western media, it is the US and its European allies which are defying the international community by their rejection of

negotiation with Iran without pre-conditions. Their absence of good faith is evidenced by the demand that Iran concedes the main point of negotiations, namely, suspension of enrichment of uranium - which is Iran's legitimate right under the Non-Proliferation Treaty - before the negotiations even begin.

The Campaign Against Sanctions and Military Intervention in Iran (CASMI) calls for immediate and direct negotiations between the US and Iran without any pre-conditions.

Here, we briefly examine and debunk some key accusations against Iran and outline the reasons for opposing sanctions and military intervention against Iran.

IRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAMME: FACTS AND LIES

- 1. Iran has a right to develop nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.** Iran was among the first of 190 countries to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1968, in order to "*prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology*", and "*to promote cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy*". The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty represents "*the only binding commitment in a multilateral treaty to the goal of disarmament by the nuclear-weapon States*". [1] As a party to the NPT, Iran has an "*inalienable right*" [2] to develop a civilian nuclear technology and to enrich uranium for peaceful purposes. Iran is also entitled to full technical assistance from other NPT members. However, Western pressure has blocked Iran's access to such cooperation, forcing the country to strive for self-reliance in nuclear technology. [3]
- 2. There is no evidence of a nuclear weapons programme in Iran.** The US now nominally recognizes Iran's legal right under the NPT to develop nuclear technology for civilian use, but charges that Iran's nuclear programme is a cover for developing nuclear weapons. There is absolutely no proof to back up this charge. [1] Thousands of man-hours of United Nations inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the most intensive and intrusive ever undertaken in its history, have not produced one shred of evidence of nuclear weapons planning in Iran. [2] [3] Every IAEA report on Iran to date, including the hyped-up report of 8 November 2011, has confirmed that the "*Agency continues to verify the non-diversion of declared nuclear material in Iran*" [4] to any weaponisation programme, which is the only mandate of the Agency with respect to its Safeguard Agreements with Iran.

Western discourse against Iran's nuclear programme is simply a pretext, like the WMD in Iraq which never existed, to pressure and isolate Iran, to cripple its economy to manufacture mass discontent, and to divide Iranians as a prelude to a regime change and installation of a US puppet government.

Since 2004, the US and its allies have singled out Iran and demand that Iran prove it is not hiding a nuclear weapons programme now or intent on developing one in the future [5]. To satisfy this demand is a logical impossibility, like when the U.S demanded that Iraq prove it was not making weapons of mass destruction. In the case of Iraq, in September 2002, after 11 years of the most comprehensive search by UN inspectors, Iraqi Foreign Minister, Naji Sabri, read a statement from

Saddam Hussein before the UN Secretariat: *“Our country is ready to receive any scientific experts, accompanied by politicians you choose to represent any one of your countries, to tell us which places and scientific and industrial installations they would wish to see.”* [New York Times, 9/20/2002] [6]. Still, Iraq was charged with fabricated evidence that it had purchased “yellow cake” uranium powder from Niger and that it had links with Al-Qaeda. No evidence to the contrary by analysts and UN inspectors and nothing that Iraq said or did could stop the 2003 catastrophic invasion of that country – after which the US had to admit the charges were false. [7]

In July 2007, IAEA and Iran agreed on a Work Plan with defined modalities and timetable to clarify all issues of concerns in relation to Iran’s nuclear programme. On 27th August 2007, IAEA announced that *“The Agency has been able to verify the non-diversion of the declared nuclear materials at the enrichment facilities in Iran and has therefore concluded that it remains in peaceful use”*. The agreement also cleared Iran’s plutonium experiments, which the Cheney Camp had accused of being evidence of Iran’s weaponisation programme [8]. Dr Mohammad El-Baradei, the IAEA Ex-Director General, said on 7th September 2007, *“For the last few years we have been told by the Security Council, by the board, we have to clarify the outstanding issues in Iran because these outstanding issues are the ones that have led to the lack of confidence, the crisis”, “We have not come to see any undeclared activities or weaponisation of their programme”* [9].

Two years earlier, in June 2005, Bruno Pellaud, former IAEA Deputy Director General for Safeguards, asked by Swissinfo if Iran was intent on building a nuclear bomb. He replied: *“My impression is not. My view is based on the fact that Iran took a major gamble in December 2003 by allowing a much more intrusive capability to the IAEA. If Iran had had a military programme they would not have allowed the IAEA to come under this Additional Protocol. They did not have to.”*

The satisfactory conclusion of the IAEA-Iran Work Plan on all of the nine *“outstanding issues”* in September 2007, would have warranted the return of Iran’s nuclear file from the Security Council to the jurisdiction of the IAEA. However, the Agency report of 22 February 2008 [10], raised the question of, what it termed as, *“alleged studies”*, based on documents received from Western intelligence agencies purporting to show studies of nuclear weapon systems. The report said however that *“the agency has not detected the use of nuclear material in connection with the alleged studies, nor does it have credible information in this regard”* [11]. The authenticity of many of these documents, which based on the US claim, were obtained from a *“laptop”* stolen from Iran in 2004, has been challenged and disregarded as *“fabricated”*, [12] [13] even by officials of the IAEA, analysts and some Western intelligence agencies, ever since the supposed *“intelligence”* was first raised in 2004. New York Times, at the time (13.11.2005) [14] quoted the assessment of intelligence sources, that *“any sophisticated intelligence service could fabricate such a laptop”*.

It was the successful resolution of the IAEA-Iran Work Plan that prompted the US and Israel to resurrect the alleged “stolen laptop” as evidence of weaponisation studies.

The latest IAEA report of 8 November 2011 [15], contrary to the Western media's frenzied chorus about the evidence of "*nuclear weapons research*" (Jullian Borger, Guardian 07/11/2011) [16] [17], once again confirmed the non-diversion of all declared material to nuclear weaponisation. This is the only mandate of the Agency in relation to the Safeguard Agreements with Iran. The report, however, expressed concern, for the first time, under the new head of the Agency, Yukiya Amano - exposed in Wiki-leaks documents [18] as a staunch ally of the US against Iran - that Iran may have experimented with military research before 2004 and that these may have continued since.

These allegations, however, are not new but are based on the old discredited "*documents*" from the "*alleged studies*" obtained from the alleged "*stolen laptop*" referred to above. There is only one new alleged evidence in the report. There is a reference to a "*former Soviet nuclear weapons scientist*" who allegedly assisted Iran in building the cylindrical explosion chamber. But was subsequently revealed that "Vyacheslav Danilenko" was not a nuclear scientist at all but a Ukrainian world specialist in nano-diamonds who had assisted Iran with work on nanotechnology. Furthermore, Robert Kelly, who was the UNSC Chief Nuclear Inspector in Iraq, rejects this claim as "*highly misleading*". Kelly, a nuclear engineer, states that the cylindrical chamber referred to by the IAEA "*could not possibly have been used for hydrodynamic testing of a nuclear weapon design, contrary to the IAEA claim*". (Gareth Porter, Counterpunch 21.11.11). [19]

3. Iran's need for nuclear Energy and Technology is real. Western charges against Iran that the oil rich country does not need nuclear power is hypocritical and dishonest. With Iran's population of 70 million, and growing, and its oil resources fast depleting, Iran may be a net importer of oil in just over a decade from now. Nuclear energy is a realistic solution for electricity generation in the country, for the foreseeable future. Iran's population has more than doubled in three decades and its per capita energy consumption has grown even faster. Demand has outpaced production so much that electricity is rationed with rotating scheduled cuts in Tehran during peak periods of summer heat, and in July of 2010, most public sector agencies in 20 of Iran's 30 provinces shut down intermittently for conservation. So the country needs to diversify its energy sources to keep up with demand and still have enough oil and gas for export and for future generations. This need was recognized years before the 1979 Revolution, when Iran planned multiple nuclear power stations with support from all US Administrations at the time. [1]

In fact, a report (Katzman, K. 2009) [2] by US Congressional Research Service refers to the analysis by "*the National Academy of Sciences challenging the US view that Iran is petroleum rich and therefore has no need for a nuclear power programme*". "*According to the analysis, the relative lack of investment is causing a decline in Iranian oil exports to the point where Iran might have negligible exports of oil by 2015*". The analysis (Stern, R. 2001) by the US National Academy of Sciences stated, as far back as 2001, that "*The regime's dependence on export revenue suggests that it could need nuclear power as badly as it claims. Recent analyses by former National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) officials project*

that oil exports could go to zero within 12-19 years. It therefore seems possible that Iran's claim to need nuclear power might be genuine ..." [3].

Iran's dependency on Western-dominated global markets, as well as the low refining capacity due to sanctions, and the need for importation of petroleum products, make Iran vulnerable to foreign economic warfare. With global oil derivatives, such as gasoline and petrochemical items shrinking in availability and increasing in price, Iran truly needs to reduce its dependency on imports. Iran has the largest fleet of oil tankers in the Middle East but these ships are easy targets for attack or sabotage. [4] [5] It is, therefore, in Iran's legitimate security interests to develop alternatives to oil for domestic consumption.

Iran's need for nuclear technology is not limited to economic and energy security aspects. The country also needs nuclear fuel for its medical purposes. Tehran Research Reactor (TRR) which produces isotopes for treatment of more than 800,000 cancer patients and other complicated diseases, ran out of fuel in 2010. More has to be produced by Iran itself, because not only the half-life of the radioisotopes used by the TRR, is too short to be imported from other countries, but also because the US and its allies have a history of blocking Iran's right to purchase fuel for TRR from the international market.

All these considerations fully justify the urgency of Iran's civilian nuclear programme.

4. The alleged "crisis" over Iran's nuclear programme is manufactured.

US/Israel and their allies have been claiming for years that Iran is dangerously within reach of possessing the bomb or the capability to make the bomb, with estimate ranging from several years to a year or even a few months. [1]

Nuclear power plants and atomic weapons both require enriched uranium but whereas weapons grade uranium must be enriched to 90% or above, low enriched uranium (LEU) suitable for power plants requires enrichment up to 5%, or for medical applications up to 19.75%. According to Dr Frank Barnaby of the Oxford Research Group, because of contamination of Iranian uranium with heavy metals, Iran cannot possibly enrich beyond even 20% without support from Russia or China [2].

The US Secretary of Defence, Leon Panetta's remarks) in December 2010 is a clear indication of the manufactured nature of this crisis. In an interview with the CBS, Panetta, raising the specter of war [3], said *"It would probably be about a year before they could do it [build the bomb]. Perhaps a little less. But one proviso, **if** they have a hidden facility somewhere in Iran that **may be** enriching fuel."* This total absence of *"intelligence"* was also reiterated by Pentagon Press Secretary, George Little, *"The secretary [Panetta] was clear that we have no indication that the Iranians have made a decision to develop a nuclear weapon"*. Pentagon spokesman confirmed that any attempt at diverting low-enriched uranium to a hidden facility and its conversion to weapons grade, would be instantly detected by the UN inspectors.

These admissions sharply contradict and belie the conclusions of the International Atomic Energy Agency's report of November 2011, that Iran "*has carried out activities relevant to the development of a nuclear device*". According to the IAEA, this intelligence was given to it by "*some member states*". As Pat Buchanan (Anti-War.Com) questions "*Did the IAEA discover clandestine bomb-building that our own intelligence community failed to detect?*" and if so, why the US National Intelligence Estimate, which in line with Pentagon's statement above, states that there is no evidence of a weaponisation programme in Iran, not been modified accordingly? [ibid]

5. Iran has met its obligations under the Nuclear non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). In 2002, the National Council of Resistance, which according to the US state department is a front organisation for the terrorist group, MEK (Modjahedin-e-Khalgh), allegedly 'revealed' to the IAEA the existence of two nuclear sites. These were the uranium enrichment plant in Natanz and the heavy water reactor in Arak, which were still under construction. However, at that time, Iran was not obliged to either allow inspection of the sites or even inform the IAEA of the existence of the facilities, until six months prior to the introduction of nuclear material into the sites. Although in 1992, IAEA board of governors had introduced a new Safeguards Agreement according to which facilities must be reported at the planning phase, Iran was not a signatory to this agreement.

To boost confidence in its nuclear programme during the course of two years of negotiations with the EU3 (France, UK, Germany), the Iranian government voluntarily suspended its nuclear enrichment programme and in December 2003 also voluntarily implemented the IAEA's Additional Protocol for more intrusive inspections than those required under the NPT, [1] until February 2006, when under the US pressure, Iran's file was reported to the UN Security Council.

The claim that Iran violated its NPT Safeguard obligations in not having disclosed the construction of its enrichment facility in Qom until September 2009, is, as in the case of similar charges with respect to the sites in Natanz and Arak, false and a distortion of Iran's present obligations [2]. Under its NPT Safeguard obligations Iran was not obliged to disclose the facility to the IAEA until 180 days (6 months) in advance of introducing fissile material into it. In fact, Iran did so 18 months in advance. It is important to remember that the expectations would be valid only if Iran were still bound by the optional Additional Protocol [3]. Iran has offered to implement the Additional Protocol again if its file is returned from the Security Council to the IAEA, but the offer has been rejected by the US and its Western allies.

Iran's completely legal option of declaring its new nuclear sites only six months before the introduction of nuclear material in them, which is labeled as concealment by the West, started in the context of the US-backed invasion of Iran by Saddam Hussein. Not only the US, Germany, and the UK were complicit in the sale of chemical weapons to Iraq which were used against Iranian soldiers and civilians, but Israel's destruction of Iraq's Osirak reactor in 1981 was treated with total impunity. Iranian leaders then concluded from these gross injustices, that international laws are only "ink on paper".

But the most direct reasons for Iran's non-declaration, were the American trade embargo on Iran and Washington's organized and persistent campaign to stop civilian nuclear technology reaching Iran from any source. For example, in 1995 Germany offered to let Kraftwerk Union (a subsidiary of Siemens) finish Iran's Bushehr reactor, but withdrew its proposal under US pressure [4]. The following year, China cancelled its contract to build a nuclear enrichment facility in Isfahan for the same reason [5]. Thus Washington systematically violated, with impunity, Article IV of the NPT, which allows "*signatories the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy*".

Nevertheless, as stated earlier, Iran's decision not to declare all of its nuclear installations did not violate its NPT obligations. As confirmed by David Albright and Corey Hinderstein, who first provided satellite imagery and analysis in December 2002 [6], under the safeguards agreement in force at the time, "*Iran is not required to allow IAEA inspections of a new nuclear facility until six months before nuclear material is introduced into it.*"

Further, Western leaders and media often quote from the IAEA reports that Iran has not provided the necessary cooperation to permit the Agency to confirm that all nuclear material in Iran is in peaceful activities. [7] [8], they never mention in public that this kind of arbitrary accusation is applicable also to dozens of other NPT members, including South Africa, Egypt and Brazil as well 14 European countries including Germany that have not agreed to the optional NPT Additional Protocol to allow extra-intrusive inspections. [9] [10]

6. Iran has given unprecedented concessions on its nuclear programme. Unlike North Korea, Iran, in the face illegal IAEA and Security Council resolutions, and aggressive diplomacy and threats from the West, including chronic threats of military attack, has resisted the temptation to withdraw from the NPT.

Iran voluntarily accepted snap inspections under Additional Protocol until February 2006, and has offered to implement this again subject to the return of its nuclear file from the Security Council to the IAEA [11].

Iran has invited Western companies to develop Iran's civilian nuclear programme. Such joint ventures would create the best assurance that the enriched uranium would not be diverted to a weapons programme. Such concessions are very rare in the world, but the U.S. and its allies have refused Iran's offer.

The nuclear swap (Tehran Agreement) deal brokered by Turkey and Brazil in 2010, according to which Tehran agreed to swap 1200kg of its low enriched uranium with uranium rods already enriched to 20% for cancer treatment, was a huge compromise on the part of Iran, again rejected by the US. (see 7 below)

In September 2011, President Ahmadi-Nejad, speaking to the UN General Assembly, announced Iran's preparedness to suspend the enrichment of uranium to the higher percentage of 20%, if the West provided Iran with uranium rods enriched to that level. This offer was repeated on Iranian State Television in

October, *"If they give us the 20 percent (Enriched) fuel, we will immediately halt 20 percent (Enrichment)*. This offer too was ignored by the Obama administration [2]. On 1st January 2012, Iran announced the domestic testing and production of its first fuel rods for Tehran Research Reactor. [3]

- 7. The Western alliance has not tried true diplomacy and relies instead on threats.** Since Iran, once in the past, did suspend its enrichment programme for two years in 2003-2005 without any result, it now refuses to do so again before bilateral negotiations begin - as demanded by the White House - because it suspects, Washington - just as it did in Iraq - will stall with endless doubts regarding verification of suspension.

Another striking instance of the absence of genuine diplomacy is the case of Tehran Agreement of 2010, under Obama administration. In the fall of 2009, the Vienna Group (US, France, Russia and the IAEA) proposed that Iran swap 1,200 kilograms of its low-enriched uranium with fuel rods enriched to 20%, which Iran needed for the production of medical isotopes in Tehran Research reactor, for the treatment of some 800000 cancer patients. Iran accepted this offer in principle, but insisted on guarantees to ensure it would actually receive the fuel rods. The Obama administration walked away from the negotiating table, adopting a "take it or leave it" position [1].

Iran, on the other hand, emphasized its readiness for more negotiations over the fuel swap proposal. Turkish Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, and Brazilian President, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, stated their willingness for mediating the Iranian nuclear swap deal in a meeting with President Obama during the Nuclear Security Summit in New York in April 2010. Accordingly, President Obama stated in a letter to President Lula that, for the US *"Iran's agreement to transfer 1,200 kg of Iran's low enriched uranium (LEU) out of the country would build confidence and reduce regional tensions by substantially reducing Iran's LEU stockpile."* President Obama further stated that *"this element is of fundamental importance for the United States. For Iran, it would receive the nuclear fuel requested to ensure continued operation of the TRR to produce needed medical isotopes and, by using its own material, Iran would begin to demonstrate peaceful nuclear intent."* [2]

On May 17, 2010, after 18 hours of negotiations in Tehran, Turkey, Brazil and Iran signed a third-country swap agreement (the "Tehran Agreement") in which Iran compromised in every area it considered vital to its interests along the lines that President Obama had mentioned in his letter. [3] And yet, regardless of initial support for the Iran-Turkey-Brazil Agreement, President Obama decided to dismiss the Tehran Agreement [4] and push for the fourth round of sanctions against Iran in the UNSC [5].

8. UN SECURITY COUNCIL INVOLVEMENT TOTALLY UNJUSTIFIED

There has been no legal grounds for Iran's referral to the UN Security Council. There has never been any evidence of a nuclear weaponisation program in Iran and Iran has fully cooperated with the IAEA within the framework of the NPT guidelines.

The two votes in 2005 and 2006 in the Governors' Board of the IAEA to report

Iran's nuclear file to the U.N. Security Council (UNSC) were coerced and politicized moves that were, as explained by a leading international lawyer, legally untenable [1]. David Mulford, the US Ambassador to India, warned the Government of India in January 2006 that there would be no US-India nuclear deal if India did not vote against Iran at the IAEA. On 15 February 2007, Stephen Rademaker, the former US Assistant Secretary for International Security and Non-Proliferation, admitted publicly that the US coerced India to vote against Iran. [2] [3].

Clearly therefore, reporting Iran to the UN Security Council, carried out under US coercion, and any subsequent resolutions, lack legitimacy.

The process that led to the UNSC's involvement was also flawed because, under Western pressure, the IAEA's expectations of Iran exceeded NPT's Safeguards requirements. As stated earlier, Iran in December 2003, voluntarily suspended uranium enrichment and voluntarily implemented the "Additional Protocol", whilst in negotiation with EU3, as a confidence building measure. One of the main issues of concern for Iran was security guarantees from the US and its allies against aggression.

It is important to note the political background of the negotiations with the Europeans. In 2003, Iran's president was the reformist President Khatami, who pioneered the idea of "*Dialogue Amongst Civilisations*" as an antithesis to Samuel Huntington's divisive and hostile "*Clash of Civilisations*". President Khatami, in 2003, with the approval of the Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, proposed a Grand Bargain to the US [4]. Included in Iran's proposals were Iran's recognition of the Saudi Initiative, that is, a de facto recognition of Israel, Iran using its influence to persuade Hezbollah and Hamas militant organisations to cease military activity inside Israel's 1967 borders, and "*full cooperation with IAEA based on Iranian adoption of all relevant instruments (93+2 and all further IAEA protocols)*". In return, Iran asked the US to offer security guarantees against aggression, to recognise Iran's legitimate security interests in the region, and to accept and assist Iran's peaceful nuclear energy programme, ie, Iran's legal entitlements under the NPT. The US administration, under President Bush, having assigned Iran to the "*Axis of Evil*" a year previously, rejected this offer and remonstrated the Swiss Ambassador for having acted as the emissary. Hans Blix, the former UN Chief Inspector, following the referral of Iran's files to the SC in January 2006, stated the centrality of addressing Iran's security concerns, "*My criticism about the Western side is that I don't think that they have sufficiently interesting offers. ... The Iranians may well be concerned about their security, having lots of U.S. troops in Iraq, bases in Pakistan, and they're also getting foothold in the countries north of Iran and the NATO ally in Turkey to the West. And with all the talk about all weapons, all options, being on the table and with the regime changes that they've talked, I can see that the security would be a concern*". [5]

It was in the context of this intransigent warring attitude from the US, its persistence that Iran must permanently relinquish its right to enrichment and the impotence of the EU3 to offer anything of value, namely, acceptance of a fully monitored nuclear energy programme and security guarantees from the US, that the negotiations broke down. Prompted by IAEA board of governors' resolution

of 05/08/05, demanding Iran to forfeit permanently its right to enrichment and the subsequent reporting of Iran's nuclear file to the Security Council, Iran, under the administration of President Ahmadi-Nedjad, resumed its enrichment programme and dropped its adherence to the Additional Protocol, which it had only voluntarily accepted for the duration of the negotiations.

Michael Spies of the New York-based Lawyers' Committee on Nuclear Policy has clarified the issue: "*Under the Statute (Art. 12(C)) and the Safeguards Agreement, the Board may only refer Iran to the Security Council if it finds that, based on the report from the Director General, it cannot be assured that Iran has not diverted nuclear material for non-peaceful purpose. In the past, findings of 'non-assurance' have only come in the face of a history of active and ongoing non-cooperation with IAEA safeguards. The pursuit of nuclear activities in itself, which is specifically recognized as a sovereign right, and which remain safeguarded, could not legally or logically equate to uncertainty regarding diversion.*" [6]

The IAEA Ex-Director General, Dr Mohamad ElBaradei, had in fact consistently confirmed the non-diversion to weaponisation, of nuclear material in Iran. He asserted unambiguously in his interview with New York Times on 7th September 2007 that in Iran "*we have not come to see any undeclared activities ... We have not seen any weaponisation of their programme, nor have we received any information to that effect*". He repeatedly urged skeptics in Western capitals to help the IAEA by sharing any possible proof in their possession of suspicious nuclear activity in Iran. The IAEA-Iran work plan of August 2007 cleared all "*outstanding issues*" of concern, including Iran's Plutonium experiments which were regarded as a "*smoking gun*" by Ex-Vice-President, Cheney. Dr ElBaradei, however, under pressure from Washington, said that he cannot rule out the existence of undeclared nuclear activities in the country. The IAEA report (15/11/2007) pointed out "*However, it should be noted that, since early 2006, the Agency has not received the type of information that Iran had previously been providing, pursuant to the Additional Protocol and as a transparency measure. As a result, the Agency's knowledge about Iran's current nuclear programme is diminishing*". [7]

The response from the US/Israel and their allies was immediately negative, accusing Iran of "*selective cooperation*" with the IAEA. Shaul Mofaz, Israel's deputy prime minister at the time, called for the sacking of Dr ElBaradei over the IAEA's recent report on Iran. The US pressed with the demand for Iran to stop its uranium enrichment. However, as Dr ElBaradei later asserted in his speech to the Governors' Board of the IAEA in November 2007, according to the IAEA's Safeguards Implementation Report for 2005 (issued on 15 June 2006), 45 other countries, including 14 European countries, in particular Germany, are in this same category as Iran, since they have not adhered to the IAEA's Additional Protocol (which Iran voluntarily enforced until 2006). Iran has been singled out among these countries by the west for political reasons.

The National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) on Iran, issued on 3 December 2007, refutes the US and Israeli accusations that Iran has a covert nuclear weapons programme. The NIE report had been held for nearly one year in an effort by Vice

President Cheney's office to force the intelligence community to remove some of the dissenting judgments on Iran's nuclear program. Representing the views of 16 US intelligence agencies, the NIE on Iran sharply reverses its 2005 version that claimed Iran was developing nuclear weapons. The report assesses, with high confidence, that Iran's alleged military nuclear work ended in 2003, but fails to provide any evidence that such activity ever existed. If proof for this assessment had been found, it was the obligation of the US to provide it to the IAEA for on-the-ground verification.

The 2011 National Intelligence Estimate too once again states that there is no evidence that Iran is working to develop a nuclear weapon.

The NIE reports vindicate Iran's claim that the decision by the Governors Board of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to report its nuclear file to the UN Security Council in February 2006 and the subsequent Security Council resolutions and sanctions against Iran, lack legitimacy.

9. WESTERN HYPOCRISY

The UN resolutions against Iran, in contrast to the treatment of the US allies, South Korea, India, Pakistan, and Israel, smack of double standards. For example, in the year 2000, South Korea enriched 200 milligrams of uranium to near-weapons grade (up to 77%), but was not referred to the UN Security Council. [\[1\]](#)
[\[2\]](#)

India has refused to sign the NPT or allow inspections and has developed an atomic arsenal, but receives nuclear assistance from the US in violation of the NPT. More bizarrely, India has a seat on the governing board of IAEA and, under US pressure, voted to refer Iran as a violator, to the UN Security Council. Another non-signatory, Pakistan, clandestinely developed nuclear weapons but has been supported by the US as a “*war on terror*” ally.

Israel is a close ally of Washington, even though it has hundreds of clandestine nuclear weapons, has dismissed numerous UN resolutions and has refused to sign the NPT or open any of its nuclear plants to inspections.

The US itself is the most serious violator of the NPT. The only country to have ever used nuclear bombs in war, the US has refused to reduce its nuclear arsenal, in violation of Article VI of NPT. The US is also in breach of the Treaty because it is developing new generations of nuclear warheads for use against non-nuclear adversaries. Moreover, Washington has deployed hundreds of such tactical nuclear weapons all around the world in violation of Articles I and II of the NPT.

- 10. Iran has not threatened Israel or attacked another country** In sharp contrast to the track record of the so-called ‘democracies’, US, Israel, UK and France, with a bloody history of invasion, slaughter and plunder of other countries, Iran has not threatened or attacked any country for two and a half centuries. Iran's military spending per capita is among the lowest in its region. On the contrary, it is Iran that has been attacked on many occasions, including the Iraqi invasion in

1980, with the full backing of the US and its allies, which led to eight years of full-scale conflict and the loss of over a million lives. When Iraq used chemical weapons, supplied by the West, against Iranian troops, Iran did not retaliate in kind. [1] [2] [3] When Afghanistan's Taliban regime murdered eight Iranian diplomats in 1996 and remained unapologetic, Iran did not respond militarily.

Iran has been a consistent supporter of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and called for a nuclear weapons free Middle East. Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, has declared repeatedly that Iran will not attack or threaten any country. He has also issued a fatwa against the production, stockpiling and use of nuclear weapons and banned nuclear weapons as "*haram*", that is, forbidden by Islamic law. He has reiterated this fatwa in his message to the Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Conference in Tehran in April 2010 [4]. Since Spring 2010, Iran has been the only country to allocate a state budget to hold an annual international conference for disarmament and non-proliferation in which representatives of some UN member nations and international NGO's take part.

The comments of Iran's President Ahmadinejad against Israel have been repeated by some of Iran's leaders since 1979 and constitute no practical threat. The statement attributed to him that "*Israel should be wiped off the map*" is a distortion of the truth and has been determined by a number of Farsi linguists, amongst them, Professor Juan Cole, to be a mistranslation. What he actually said was that "*the regime occupying Jerusalem must vanish from the page of time*". Ahmadinejad has made clear that he envisions regime change in Israel through internal decay, similar to the bloodless demise of the Soviet Union or the Apartheid regime in South Africa. Shortly after Ahmadinejad's comment, Iran's supreme leader asserted categorically that Iran would not attack any country including Israel. Iranian leaders have said consistently for two decades that they will accept a two-state solution in Palestine if a majority of Palestinians favour that option.

Many U.S. political figures portray the Iranian leadership as irrational and who would use nuclear weapons as soon as they can develop them [5]. However, the nature of US concern about Iran's nuclear programme is reflected in the significant 2011 remarks by Danielle Pletka, the vice-head of foreign and defence policy of the most influential neo-conservative think tank, American Enterprise Institute. Pletka said "*The biggest problem for the United States is not Iran getting a nuclear weapon and testing it, it's Iran getting a nuclear weapon and not using it*" because Iran will then be viewed as "a responsible power" [6]. Another AEI member, Thomas Donnelly, further elaborated on the centrality of the issue of US/Israel hegemonic ambitions and regional dominance to the US/Iran stand-off, "*We're fixated on the Iranian nuclear program while the Tehran regime has its eyes on the real prize: the balance of power in the Persian Gulf and the greater Middle East*" [7].

In fact, according to Washington Post (29/12/2011) the belief that Iran would not pose an "*existential threat*" to Israel and that, in a hypothetical scenario, if Iran possessed the bomb, it would act rationally, is shared by many Israeli security

officials past and present. The current head of Mossad, Tamir Pardo, addressing Israeli Ambassadors in Jerusalem on 28/12/2011, expressed this view, which is shared amongst many, by the former head of Mossad, Meir Dagan, former Armed forces chief, Gabi Ashkenazi, former intelligence chief, Zeevi Farkash, as well as the majority in Israeli Cabinet, who all strongly oppose PM Netanyahu and his Defence Minister, Ehud Barak's drive to attack Iran's nuclear plants, "*Opponents to an attack plan say that Iran, as a rational state, would not launch a nuclear assault that would ensure a retaliatory Israeli strike on its cities, including holy sites*". [8]

11. Iran is under constant threat of illegal foreign intervention.

Iran has chronically suffered living under political, economic, military and psychological siege, war, and the prospect of war since the 1979 Revolution. The US and Israel with their vastly superior military capabilities, including massive nuclear arsenals, US military bases surrounding Iran in its neighbouring countries, and a constant naval presence in the Persian Gulf, have continually threatened Iran with the spectre of military attack and destruction.

All leading U.S. politicians, including President Obama, have threatened that in dealing with Iran "*all options are on the table*", a menacing reference to military intervention, including a nuclear attack. The Nuclear Posture Review [2010] [11] of the United States singles out only one non-nuclear armed country, namely Iran, as a possible target for American nuclear attack. Israeli officials have also repeatedly threatened Iran with bombardment.

As reported by veteran investigative journalists, Seymour Hersh [2], and Reese Erlich [3], the US, Israel, and the UK have funded and aided dissident terrorist groups and separatist movements, both in and outside Iran, to destabilise, disintegrate [4] and wipe Iran off the map. As reported first by the renowned investigative journalist Seymour Hersh in 2008 and confirmed consistently in recent years by the ex-CIA officer Philip Giraldi, there are clandestine operations by the US, British and Israeli agents, who are arming, training and funding terrorist entities such as Jundollah in Baluchistan, Arab separatists in Khuzestan, and PJAK in Kurdistan.

The US, Israel, and the UK have engaged in black operations of kidnapping and sabotage, destroying industrial facilities and military plants, killing large numbers of military personnel and civilians, murdering Iranian scientists, and damaging nuclear plants through cyber wars. There is also the 100 million dollars congressional funding for 'democracy' promotion in Iran which constitute interference in Iran's domestic affairs and Iranian people's rights of sovereignty.

The 'democracy' promotion uses a campaign of misinformation and an intense psychological war. In March 2010, Michael Eisenstadt, senior fellow and director of the Washington Institute's Military and Security Studies Programme, outlined the significance of "*the use of words, actions and emotive images as part of a sustained campaign to shape the psychological environment in Iran [as] the greatest untapped source of US leverage over the Islamic Republic*". He said

“Perhaps the most promising option is a strategic communication campaign – one that employ every means at the US government disposal to play into the [Iranian] regime’s paranoia” [5]. It is noteworthy that paranoia is the salient feature of the US and Israel’s foreign policies. Under the Obama administration, the U.S. has intensified its covert military operations in Iran.

These attempts at disintegration, intervention and domestic interference in Iran, violate the bilateral Algiers Accord of 1981, in which Washington renounced any such actions in the future. They also contravene Article 2 of the UN Charter which calls for respect of national sovereignty and forbids member countries from threatening or using force against other countries.

12. The 2009 Iranian Presidential elections and its aftermath are being exploited by pro-war forces

Many Western commentators point to the disputed 2009 Iranian elections and claim that, since there is a domestic opposition to the Iranian government, Iranians would support foreign intervention or an attempt at regime change. This is false and disingenuous. No opposition figure in Iran has ever asked for any kind of war, sanctions or even monetary help from outside the country.

While the idea of “targeted” sanctions may have some currency among a small minority of exile-based Iranians, it is strongly opposed by the overwhelming majority of Iranians in general. There were reports of similar “popular support” for threats and “smart” sanctions against Iraq by exile groups like Ahmad Chalabi’s Iraqi National Congress. Those claims were cynically cultivated by the U.S. and British neoconservatives to justify their drive toward war.

13. The Obama Administration has backtracked on its own engagement pledge and now actively opposes peaceful solutions. Barack Obama's presidential campaign included promises to move U.S. policy away from confrontation with Iran and toward *“direct and unconditional negotiations.”* Disappointingly, the Obama administration has backed away from that position. Its current policy is virtually the same as that of the Bush/Cheney administration: i.e., before there can be any negotiations, Iran must first give up its nuclear programme altogether.

The intransigence under the Obama administration became most evident with regard to the Iranian nuclear fuel swap proposal, brokered by Turkey and Brazil, in May of 2010. Obama who had proposed the nuclear swap as a test and a confidence building measure, backtracked following Iran’s concession to and signing of the deal.

Obama has kept the threat of *“all options on the table”*, and under intense pressure from the hawks in the Congress and Israel lobby [1], has agreed to the most devastating sanctions in Iran’s history which are by their nature moving inexorably towards open military confrontation with Iran. Israel Defence Minister, Ehud Barak’s remarks about the *“resolve and risk-taking”* of Obama administration in support of Israel and in displaying such aggressive stance against Iran, is considered an asset in Obama’s re-election. [2]

14. SANCTIONS A PRELUDE TO WAR

Following the publication of the November 2011 IAEA report on Iran, the US and its Western allies, spearheaded by UK, France and Canada, have escalated the imposition of unprecedented and crushing sanctions against Iran. The four Security Council sanctions extricated through massive US pressure, are used to provide a veneer of legitimacy for collective punishment of Iranian people.

All pretence of “*smart sanctions*”, ostensibly to spare the Iranian people from the worst effects of sanctions, have now been dropped. Proponents of broad sanctions have argued and won the imposition of sanctions that induce collective suffering. The view of Rep. Sherman (CA) that “*critics ... argued that [sanctions on Iran] will hurt the Iranian people. Quite frankly, we need to do just that*”, (The Hill 09/08/2010) [1] is now openly endorsed in the US Congress and by its Western allies. Democratic Congressman, Gary Ackerman (NY) explains “*The goal ... is to inflict crippling, unendurable economic pain over there*”, “*Iran’s banking sector — especially its central bank — needs to become the financial equivalent of Chernobyl: radioactive, dangerous and most of all, empty.*” And President Obama, in his desperation to appease the warmongers, boasts of applying “*the toughest sanctions that Iran’s ever experienced, and [that] is having an impact inside of Iran.*” [2]

The passage of three draconian sanctions bills by the US House of Representatives on 15 December 2011, [3] is an act of war, leading to military confrontation. Kirk-Menendez Amendment to the Defence Authorisation Bill (H.R. 1540) sanctions foreign central banks, companies and financial institutions that conduct transactions with Iran’s Central Bank, with limited waiver authority from the President. “*Iran Threat Reduction Act*” (H.R. 1905) imposes embargo on Iranian export of petroleum, oil and gas. The bill broadens the sanctions to include companies whose subsidiaries trade with Iran and sanctions the construction of infrastructure such as ports, railways, and roads to deliver refined petroleum products within Iran [4]. The prohibition of diplomacy in the bill, which for the first time in US history bars the US President to engage in dialogue and negotiation with an adversary, i.e., Iran, is an ominous move towards war, and could potentially impose unprecedented restrictions on freedom of association and expression for American citizens themselves.

The rationale offered for these sanctions is that revenues from oil, gas and other energy products, which account for nearly 80% of Iran’s foreign exchange revenue, help finance Iran’s nuclear program. In reality, Iran’s nuclear programme accounts for a fraction of this revenue. “*These same revenues also account for the bulk of Iran’s public budget which helps finance public health services, public education, subsidized food for the poor and many other social services programs*”. [5]

Cutting Iran’s foreign revenue will strangulate the Iranian economy and inflict enormous harm and pain on the Iranian population. These sanctions are contrary to international law, as pointed out both by Russia and China, and are against moral principles, which lead to crimes against humanity. According to the UNICEF study [6], until 2001, the US/UK sanctions in Iraq, had resulted in the

death of at least 500,000 children of disease and malnutrition. It is estimated that the number soared to over a million until the 2003 invasion and beyond, when the sanctions remained in force. Sanctions would not however bring the Islamic Republic to its knees. Sanctions weaken civil society and make the population reliant on state rations and hand-outs. Furthermore, any kind of sanctions, including the so-called "targeted" or "smart" sanctions, are viewed by the Iranian people as the West's punishment for Iran's scientific progress (uranium enrichment for reactor fuel). As sanctions tighten, nationalist fervour will strengthen the resolve of Iranians to defend the country's civilian nuclear programme and to unite against war.

The ultimate goal of sanctions is a forced regime change, and installation of a US client regime in Iran.

15. THE THREAT OF MILITARY ATTACK ON IRAN IS IMMINENT

A political, economic and military siege is being steadily tightened around Iran pushing towards a full scale Western military attack, led by the US and the UK, and driven by Israel and its lobbies, most importantly American Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). The frenzied war drums of the final months of the Bush era, which temporarily receded by the world banking crisis and the new dawn of the Presidency of Obama in November 2008, have gathered an intensity and immediacy reminiscent of the months preceding the invasion of Iraq.

The remarks by the US Chair of the Joint Chief of Staff, Martin Dempsey (20/12/2011) that the preparations for war with Iran “*are evolving to a point that are executionable*” [1] and that the US can successfully attack Iran, if necessary, are presented as more of a warning threat rather than an actual expression of intent. However, in the tense and paranoid climate of bullying and uncompromising confrontation, fuelled by unrelenting pressure from Israel and the hawks pushing for war, it leaves no doubt that they could rapidly actualise into an unstoppable and catastrophic confrontation [2].

All the Republican presidential candidates, with the honourable exception of Ron Paul, with keen eyes on Israel lobbies’ purse to fund their campaigns, have committed themselves to war and regime change in Iran, should they be elected. The anti-Iran stance in the Congress, however, is bipartisan and nearly unanimous. Many Congressional Democrats are committed supporters and beneficiaries of Israel lobbies’ funding and drive Israel’s anti-Iran agenda in the Congress. There is immense pressure by Israel on Obama administration to cut out diplomacy, enforce the most crushing sanctions, and move beyond aggressive posturing into an actual military confrontation with Iran [3]. Amongst the most influential lobbyists for war are the CEOs of the biggest military industrial complexes. These war profiteers through their massive lobbying budgets exert blackmail and corrupting influence on the Congress, the Pentagon, and the media, for a war that would create lucrative contracts and huge profits for a miniscule but powerful minority sitting “*at the top of the one percent of the “one percent” of the population*” in the United States [4] [5].

Any military attack against Iran would be a blatant violation of international law and UN charter. To advocate such an illegal action is to advocate the same crime for which the Nazi leaders of Germany were tried and convicted in the Nuremberg Trials: crime against humanity and crime against peace.

The proponents of war are frantically pushing the idea of the feasibility of a military attack on Iran from the realm of unimaginable and psychotic fantasies of a lunatic fringe, into the mainstream discussion, and, in the absence of any evidence of nuclear weaponisation or Security Council approval, are hard at work weaving ‘legal’ justifications for such an attack. [6] [7] On another front, a federal judge ruled Iran liable in the terrorist attacks of September 11 on Twin Towers for having allegedly aided Al-Qaida in carrying out the attacks. *“The findings also said Iran continues to provide material support and resources to al-Qaida by providing a safe haven for al-Qaida leadership and rank-and-file al-Qaida members”*. [8]

The UK is playing a key role in isolating Iran and pushing towards a military confrontation. The UK, a historical accomplice of the US and Israel in covert operations supporting terrorist groups and stirring unrest in Iran, is highly likely an accomplice in the *“black operations”* involving industrial/nuclear sabotage and possibly murder of Iranian scientists. In October 2010, John Sawers, the head of M16, publicly called for *“intelligence-led operations to make it more difficult for countries like Iran to develop nuclear weapons”*. Since then three Iranian scientists have been murdered in Iran and a sophisticated cyber-war has targeted Iran’s nuclear facilities [9]. The Guardian reported in November 2011 that the British armed forces had stepped up a contingency plan for taking part in a potential military attack against Iran. [10] [11]

The unilateral decision by the British government to close the British Embassy in Tehran and the Iranian Embassy in London, following the seizure of the British Embassy in Tehran, is an unprecedented over-reaction to an event for which the Iranian government has apologised. The embassy seizure by an angry crowd was provoked by crippling sanctions imposed by Britain on Iranian Central Bank and all financial institutions, with the expressed intent to ‘cripple’ the Iranian economy. The closure of the Embassy was immediately followed by yet harsher economic sanctions on Iranian companies and the extension of diplomatic freeze and sanctions on Iran to other European countries [12].

The US congressional Research Service in its document *“Iran Sanctions”*, (October 2011), states [13] *“...reducing diplomatic ties with Iran, expelling diplomats, prohibiting commercial air flights to and from Iran .. as “other steps”* by Europeans to accompany crippling sanctions.

This policy on reduction of diplomacy is remarkably in line with the claims by the former British Ambassador to Uzbekistan, Craig Murray, that in an extra-parliamentary secret meeting held last February between former Defence Minister, Liam Fox, the British Ambassador to Israel, William Gould, and Israel lobbyist, Adam Werritty, with Mossad Representatives in Israel, the discussion had *“focused on ways to ensure Britain assisted in creating favourable diplomatic conditions for an attack on Iran”* [14] [15].

Diplomacy which was the hopeful hallmark of the Obama administration has progressively and systematically crumbled under the aggressive storm of the Israel lobby and its bi-partisan neo-conservative supporters in the Congress and within the Obama administration. The euphemistically named, “targeted” sanctions, supposedly designed to spare the population from suffering, have now given way to, in Obama’s own words, “*the toughest sanctions Iran has experienced*”. Not only the embargo on the export of oil and Iran’s Central Bank and financial institutions are designed explicitly to cut the country’s lifeline, and as such, are an act of war, but the sheer enforcement of blocking Iran to export its oil, would inevitably lead to confrontation and the risk of an all-out war in the Strait of Hormuz, with massive and unforeseen consequences for the region and the world. The menacing specter of war is already visible through the exchange of threats and rhetoric. In addition, the “*Iran Threat Reduction Act*” (H.R. 1905), revived from early Bush era, provides an explosive component to an already incendiary situation. The bill prohibits any employee of US government to have any contact “*in an official or unofficial capacity*” with any person who is an agent, official, affiliated with or representative of the government of Iran. The bill denies any waiver authority for the President to ease this embargo, unless the President can convince the congress 15 days prior to the exercise of the waiver that “*failure to exercise such waiver authority would pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the vital national security interests of the United States*”.

This exclusion of any form of diplomacy and dialogue is an unmistakable recipe for manufacturing casus belli by removing any possibility of clearing misperceptions in an increasingly hostile and paranoid environment. The previous Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Michael Mullen, expressed deep concern in October 2011, “*If something happens, it’s virtually assured that we won’t get it right, that there will be miscalculations which would be extremely dangerous in that part of the world.*” [16]. This Prohibition of diplomacy is a clear proof of an intention for war and harbours catastrophic consequences for regional and international peace.

A peaceful resolution of this intensifying conflict can only be achieved by rejecting the current illegitimate course of threats and sanctions. The U.S. policy of aggression must be replaced with unconditional and comprehensive negotiations between Iran and the U.S., based on mutual respect, to build trust between the two sides and find a solution to the stand-off that recognizes Iran’s sovereignty and national rights.

16. UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES OF AN ATTACK ON IRAN

Bombing cannot end Iran's nuclear programme. Since Iran already has the expertise to enrich uranium up to the 3.5% grade for a fuel cycle, no degree of bombing will halt Iran’s civilian nuclear programme. On the contrary, the resulting mass casualties and destruction would strengthen the voices that argue Iran, like North Korea, should build a nuclear deterrent.

An attack on Iran will unite Iranians against the US and its allies. A great majority of the public in Iran support the country’s right to enrich uranium for civilian purposes. This has been confirmed by all opinion polls conducted in the

country, including polls taken by Western institutions [1]. Therefore, a bombing campaign will not lead to an uprising by the Iranian people for regime change as envisaged by the US. Rather, it would ignite nationalist feelings in the country and unite the population, including most of the government's critics, against the West.

A nuclear attack on Iran would fuel a new nuclear arms race and ruin the NPT. Any military intervention against Iran will lead to a regional catastrophe and expanded terrorism. Senator McCain, the former Republican presidential hopeful, who advocated the use of force on Iran, has predicted that an attack against Iran will lead to Armageddon. American or Israeli aggression on Iran, coming on the heels of the Iraq disaster, would inflame the grievance and outrage of Muslims worldwide and help jihadi extremists with their recruitment campaign. The region wide conflagration resulting from an Israel/US attack on Iran would dwarf the Iraq catastrophe [2].

The state of siege the US and its allies have imposed on Iran with their daily threats of military attack, economic warfare and oil embargo, as well as covert military and terrorist operations to destabilise the Islamic Republic with the aim of regime change has played a key role in restricting the country's civil society and democracy. This would of course be dwarfed by the consequences of a military assault on the country. Only by removing the threat against Iran, the country can find its own road toward a full flourishing of democracy.

The western hawkish strategy against Iran would by its very objective logic lead to a military conflict with devastating consequences for the people of Iran, the region and the whole world. It would send the price of a barrel of oil to up to \$300 which would bring a complete collapse of the fragile world economy, causing unimaginable hardship to the people of the west and the whole world. The West is thus pursuing a lose-lose strategy which will only benefit a tiny minority in the military-industrial complexes as well as some crazy Zionist and Christian fundamentalists who seek to hasten the coming of the Messiah by pushing for war and Armageddon. Against this cataclysmic scenario, there is a simple win-win strategy for the west which would only require sitting with Iranians to negotiate in good faith. Indeed, Iran is categorically against nuclear weapons and the West demands that Iran does not develop them. This is clearly the ideal situation as a common ground between Iran and the West. But it will take a huge mass mobilization by the people in the west to pressure their leaders to opt for this win-win situation and avert a catastrophic situation for the world.

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