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## ***The Stakes of Donald Trump's Negotiations with the Islamic Republic of Iran***

The general public is completely unaware of the real stakes in the negotiations between Washington and Tehran. This article presents a situation in which lies have been piling up over three decades, making any progress particularly difficult. Contrary to popular belief, the nuclear issue in Iran is not whether Tehran will acquire an atomic bomb, but whether it will be able to help Palestine without resorting to weapons.

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Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has authorized indirect negotiations with the United States, despite Donald Trump's threats.

A month and a half ago, I announced that even before concluding peace in Ukraine, President Donald Trump would open negotiations with Iran [1]. As usual, commentators steeped in Joe

Biden's ideology showered me with sarcasm, while my colleagues, specialists in international affairs, noted my observations [2].

The difference between the two lay in their understanding of the negotiations in Ukraine. For the former, it was Donald Trump's revenge against Volodymyr Zelensky, or a genuflection before Vladimir Putin. For the latter, it was, on the contrary, a desire for peace with Russia in order to devote US resources to its economic recovery.

It follows that the two sides approach the Iranian issue differently. For the former, it is a matter of continuing the chaos that began during the first term with the withdrawal from the nuclear agreement (JCPOA). Conversely, for the latter, it is a desire for peace with Iran, given that it is the only regional power that supports the resistance to Israel.

In early March 2024, President Donald Trump sent a letter to the leader of the Revolution, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. The existence of this document was mentioned by the author himself during his speech to Congress on March 4, and then debated in the press. According to Sky News Arabia, which read this document, Donald Trump called for negotiations, while specifying: "If you reject the outstretched hand and choose the path of escalation and support for terrorist organizations, I warn you of a swift and determined response [...] I am writing this letter with the aim of opening new horizons for our relations, away from the years of conflict, misunderstandings and unnecessary confrontations that we have witnessed in recent decades [...] The time has come to leave hostility behind and open a new page of cooperation and mutual respect." A historic opportunity presents itself to us today [...] We will not stand idly by in the face of your regime's threats against our people or our allies [...] If you are willing to negotiate, so are we. But if you continue to ignore the world's demands, history will testify that you missed a great opportunity."

Simultaneously, the United States and the United Kingdom launched several attacks against Ansar Allah in Yemen. Unlike previous attacks, these did not target hidden military targets, but rather political targets scattered among the civilian population. They therefore killed leaders of the movement and many other collateral victims, which constitutes war crimes.

It should be recalled that Ansar Allah, pejoratively referred to by Westerners as the "Houthi family gang" or "the Houthis," attacks Israeli ships in the Red Sea in order to force Tel Aviv to agree to allow humanitarian aid to pass through to Gaza.

Washington and London, believing that this was hampering international trade, and having failed to obtain approval from the Security Council, resumed the war. They initially targeted military objectives and quickly realized that these, buried deep within the country, could not be significantly affected.

Donald Trump's letter only arrived in Tehran on March 12, and the Iranian response was slow in coming. It is important to understand that while Tehran was flattered by Washington's secret handwritten approach, it could not accept several aspects of its behavior.

- First, the United States, faithful to Trump's Art of the Deal technique, threatened Iran while trying to placate it. International relations are not governed by the same rules as business. Giving in to threats is a sign of weakness that the Iranians could not accept in these negotiations. Ayatollah Ali Khamenei commented on March 28: "The enmity of the United States and Israel has always existed. They threaten to attack us, which we believe is not very likely, but if they commit a misdeed, they will certainly receive a strong blow in return." If the enemies think they can instigate sedition in the country, the Iranian nation itself will respond to them." President Donald Trump further emphasized this on March 30, telling NBC News: "If they don't reach an agreement, there will be bombing. It will be bombing like they've never seen before."

According to the United Nations Charter (Article 2, paragraph 4), "members of the Organization shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state." The negotiations were therefore compromised before they even began.

- Moreover, massacring the leaders of Ansar Allah was a gratuitous war crime: General Qassem Soleimani, by reorganizing the "Axis of Resistance," had given Iran's former proxies their complete freedom. Tehran currently has no influence, other than ideological, over Ansar Allah. Ambassador Amir Saeid Irvani therefore raised these points at the United Nations [3].
- Finally, and most importantly, Donald Trump, by accumulating contradictory signals, did not allow the Iranians to assess his relations with Israel. Does he support the project of a binational state in Palestine (the one promoted by the United Nations)? Or of a Jewish state in Palestine ("Zionism")? Or that of a "Greater Israel" ("Revisionist Zionism")? No one knows for sure.

Ultimately, Iran sent a secret response to the secret letter from the United States, and negotiations were able to begin, but only indirectly. That is, the two delegations did not speak directly to each other, but only through a mediator. In this way, Tehran responded to the invitation, but expressed its disapproval of the manner in which it was convened.

Intervening directly, France and the United Kingdom convened a closed-door meeting of the Security Council. Paris and London wished to address several outstanding issues. As nothing has been leaked, it is unclear whether President Emmanuel Macron and Prime

Minister Keir Starmer wanted to clarify what had caused all other attempts at negotiations to fail or, on the contrary, to obscure what could have been further obscured.

The following day, March 13, Mohammad Hassan-Nejad Pirkouhi, Director General for International Peace and Security at the Iranian Foreign Ministry, summoned the ambassadors of the United States, France, and the United Kingdom. He criticized them for an "irresponsible and provocative" meeting of the Security Council, which abused UN mechanisms. He emphasized that while Iran no longer respects its commitment not to enrich uranium above 3.67%, it is still respecting its JCPoA commitments to IAEA inspectors and fulfilling its obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

It should be recalled that, generally speaking, Iran, following the United States, withdrew from the JCPoA and the secret bilateral agreements of the time, yet it still observes its JCPoA commitments [4]. In contrast, France and the United Kingdom, while claiming to respect the JCPoA, have taken no measures to address the consequences of the US withdrawal, in violation of the spirit of the text. The United Kingdom immediately responded by stating that it was prepared to reinstate UN sanctions by October 18 (the deadline for this procedure) if Iran did not curb its uranium enrichment. The UN sanctions were, in fact, suspended, not repealed.

Three rounds of indirect negotiations have already taken place. The US delegation was led by Steve Witkoff, President Donald Trump's special envoy for the Middle East, and the Iranian delegation by Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi. The first and third meetings were held in Muscat and Oman, while the second was held at the Sultanate's embassy in Rome, in the presence of the Director of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Rafael Grossi of Argentina. Sayyid Badr bin Hamad bin Hamood al-Busaidi, Omani Foreign Minister, acted as mediator at each opportunity, moving back and forth between the delegations.

Numerous statements were made by the US side, accumulating imprecisions and contradictions, both regarding previous rounds of negotiations and especially regarding Washington's red lines. Each side therefore believes it understands what it wants. In Iran, too, the public debate is particularly obscure. However, we note that one current, drawing lessons from the Libyan and Korean affairs, maintains that if Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini were still alive, he would likely rescind his fatwa condemning weapons of mass destruction and, on the contrary, authorize the atomic bomb. Not because he would now find it moral from a Muslim perspective, but because it would protect Iran from the threats it faces. Indeed, Muammar Gaddafi's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, which was on the verge of acquiring such a bomb, voluntarily dismantled its facilities and received congratulations from Washington before

being crushed by it. Meanwhile, Kim Jong-un's Democratic People's Republic of Korea still manages to resist the Pentagon because it possesses the bomb and boasts about it.

On April 22, in a lengthy interview with *Time Magazine*, President Donald Trump clarified his thinking. In it, he declared that he had withdrawn the United States from the JCPoA and ordered the assassination of General Qassem Soleimani in order to deprive Iran of its ability to fuel resistance against Israel; a precondition for regional peace. He had never explained this, and this helps us understand his intention during these negotiations. [5]

Meanwhile, Benjamin Netanyahu's "revisionist Zionists" (not to be confused with simply "Zionists"), continuing three decades of lies, have increased pressure to sabotage the ongoing contacts [6]. In Washington, their chief leader, Elliott Abrams, published a memo [7] outlining what he calls "the seven deadly sins" of previous US administrations toward Iran. This document helps us understand the position of the warmongers.

According to this note, the JCPoA negotiated by the Obama administration would not have succeeded in curbing Iran's nuclear ambitions and, by returning some blocked funds, would have given it the means to fight Israel. However, during the 5+1 talks in Lausanne and Geneva, all the actors (except the United States represented by Secretary of State John Kerry) had reached the conclusion that there had been no military nuclear program in Iran since 1988 and the fatwa of Imam Ruhollah Khomeini. This point, always contested by Israel, was just confirmed on March 24 by the Director of US Intelligence, Tulsi Gabbard, during her Senate hearing and in her annual report on threats against her country [8]. It is absolutely clear to Germany, China, France, the United Kingdom and Russia (and probably to many others) that the Israeli accusation is based on nothing; that it's pure deception.

- 1) Based on this oft-repeated lie, the "revisionist Zionists" rely on the fact that Iran, in response to the United States' withdrawal from the JCPoA and the secret agreements it signed with John Kerry, has continued its uranium enrichment to 60%, and demand that Tehran be banned from all uranium enrichment. This demand must be clearly understood: it would prohibit Iran from any civilian program, including, for example, radiation treatments that are practiced by Western countries in all their hospitals.

This claim amounts to a desire to return Iran to underdevelopment. It corresponds to the way in which certain European states have banned their colonies from modern activities in order to maintain their domination.

2) The "revisionist Zionists" continue by demanding that the negotiations not be limited to the nuclear program, but also include the issue of missiles. For years, France and the United

Kingdom have falsely claimed that Tehran's development of ballistic and hypersonic missiles violates UN sanctions. To do so, they deliberately confuse the research and production of ballistic missiles with the nuclear warheads they could carry if Iran possessed them.

Russia and China have repeatedly intervened to remind the Security Council "that none of the existing international instruments and mechanisms, including the Missile Technology Control Regime or the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, explicitly or implicitly prohibits Iran from developing missile and space programs." » [9]

During the Iranian bombing of Israel on October 1, 2024, it turned out that all Iranian missiles and drones missed their targets or were shot down in flight, with the exception of all hypersonic missiles, which all hit their targets. This issue, unrelated to nuclear matters, is therefore essential for Israel.

- 3) The "revisionist Zionists" also demand that monitoring be carried out on Western terms, not Iranian terms. However, for the time being, Iran is subject, with its own consent, to the strictest IAEA verification procedures ever enacted. Tehran complies scrupulously, and it is difficult to see why new ones should be imposed on it, unless one wants to create a problem where none exists.

- 4) The "revisionist Zionists" continue by asserting that the threat of US force must not be abandoned prematurely. Yet this is the only civilized way to proceed, as set out in the United Nations Charter (Article 2, paragraph 4) cited above.

Knowing that Israel lacks the means to attack Iran alone and that Tel Aviv continues to pressure Washington to draw it into a war against Tehran, it is easy to understand what this fourth point conceals.

- 5) Then, the revisionist Zionists oppose the easing of UN sanctions and unilateral coercive measures by the United States, the United Kingdom, and the European Union on the grounds that this would encourage Iran to finance terrorism. We are not talking here about the assassinations Tehran orders abroad, but about its support for Hamas, Islamic Jihad, Hezbollah, and the Resistance in Iraq, knowing that it no longer provides financial and military support to Ansar Allah. However, the conflicts in Palestine, Syria, and Iraq are all instances of popular resistance to Israeli military actions. They are legitimate under international law (which does not mean that all actions carried out in their name are legitimate).

This demand, therefore, aims exclusively to allow Israel to violate UN resolutions even longer, not to prevent their violation by Iran.

• 6 and 7) The "revisionist Zionists" conclude by demanding that Iran's other "malign behaviors" not be ignored and that anti-terrorism sanctions not be eased to gain a nuclear advantage. However, Iran, like other states, does not engage in "malign behaviors" toward the United States. What we're talking about here is Iranian support for the resistance to Zionism, which revisionist Zionists understandably fear will resume significant financial support.

This lengthy discussion has presented the substance of the negotiations between Washington and Tehran. It should be noted that Donald Trump's team is riddled with figures convinced by the rhetoric of the revisionist Zionists. Many congressmen, both Democrats and Republicans, do not approach the Middle East through their own experience, but through the prism of their main donor, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). Merav Ceren, who has just been appointed head of the Israel-Iran portfolio at the White House National Security Council, is a dual national, an officer in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) [10]. However, the head of the US delegation to Oman, Steve Witkoff, is a real estate developer working in several countries, not only in the United States, but also in Muslim states. He has already demonstrated his independence of mind by negotiating on the Ukrainian issue and listening to the arguments of both sides. There is no reason, and certainly not his Jewish faith, to suspect him of bias. Thus, he reacted positively when the Iranians reiterated their proposal to make the Middle East a nuclear-weapon-free zone like Latin America [11] ; a proposal... that includes Israel.

The fourth round of negotiations will be held on May 3. Both sides now realize that peace will depend on Donald Trump's ability to break with the revisionist Zionists and make concrete progress on the fate of the Palestinians.

Thierry Meyssan

Translation

Roger Lagassé

[1] "[After Ukraine, Iran?](#)", by Thierry Meyssan, Translation Roger Lagassé, *Voltaire Network*, 20 March 2025.

[2] « [La paix de Trump en Ukraine face à la "paix mondiale" de Poutine \(avec la Chine\), de Gaza à l'Iran](#) », par Alfredo Jalife-Rahme , Traduction Maria Poumier, *La Jornada* (Mexique), *Réseau Voltaire*, 21 mars 2025.

[3] "[Iran denounces US threats to peace](#)", by Amir Saeid Iravani , *Voltaire Network*, 31 March 2025.

[4] "[Iran denies non-compliance with JCPoA and Resolution 2231](#)", by Amir Saeid Iravani , *Voltaire Network*, 9 December 2024.

- [5] «[Full Transcript of Donald Trump’s ‘100 Days’ Interview With Time](#)», Eric Cortellessa and Sam Jacobs, *Time Magazine*, April 25, 2025.
- [6] «[Who’s afraid of Iran’s civilian nuclear programme?](#)», by Thierry Meyssan, *Voltaire Network*, 27 July 2010.
- [7] «[Avoiding the seven deadly sins of a bad iranian nuclear deal](#)», March 24, 2025.
- [8] «[Annual Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community](#)», Office of the Director of National Intelligence | March 2025.
- [9] For instance : «[Russia denounces Western accusations against Iran](#)», by Vasily Nebenzya , *Voltaire Network*, 8 June 2022.
- [10] «[Trump’s NSC Director for Israel and Iran Previously Worked for Israeli Ministry of Defense](#)», Ryan Grim & Saagar Enjeti, *Drop Site*, April 21, 2025.
- [11] «[Negotiations between Iran and the United States are progressing in Oman; a nuclear Tlatelolco Treaty for the Middle East?](#)», by Alfredo Jalife-Rahme , *La Jornada* (Mexico) , *Voltaire Network*, 22 April 2025.