The Middle East Quarterly

SPRING 2017 • VOLUME 24: NUMBER 2

Obama's Legacy, a Nuclear Iran?

by Emily B. Landau
Middle East Quarterly
Spring 2017 (view PDF)

May 24, 2017: On May 17, the Trump administration renewed a waiver of sanctions preventing U.S. companies from selling to or dealing with Iran, thus extending the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) that allows Iran to continue enriching uranium with restrictions. Days later, President Trump attacked Iran in unprecedented terms in a high-profile speech in Saudi Arabia. Though seemingly contradictory, the moves follow the advice offered weeks earlier in the below article by Emily B. Landau from the Spring 2017 issue of *Middle East Quarterly*.

There is little doubt that Barack Obama deems the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) of July 2015 to be his crowning foreign policy achievement and an important pillar of his presidential legacy. To his mind, the deal is a shining nonproliferation success story achieved via peaceful diplomacy and an important catalyst to improving decades-long, moribund U.S.-Iranian relations.

But, Obama's assessment is wrong. The JCPOA has many flaws and weaknesses, and it is important to assess the president's role in the process that produced this dubious deal: What happened on the ground; how Obama's perceptions of nuclear disarmament colored his attitudes toward Iran, and the tactics he used to marginalize criticism and mobilize support for a flawed deal at the domestic level. It is equally important to examine to what lengths the president went in order to protect his problematic deal after it was presented, and at what cost. What legacy on Iran has Obama left for the next administration?

…

For full article:

http://www.meforum.org/6561/obama-legacy-a-nuclear-iran?utm_source=Middle+East+Forum&utm_campaign=5a0c4b5ac7-landau_emily_2017_05_24&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_086cfd423c-5a0c4b5ac7-33585421&goal=0_086cfd423c-5a0c4b5ac7-33585421