



How to Tame Iran and Win a Nuclear Deal

The Trump administration should remain firm with the pressure campaign, continue trying to get the Europeans on board a harsher response to Iran's aggressions, carve out a clear negotiations strategy, and be wary of blinking first.

by [Emily B. Landau](#) / October 20, 2019

For some time now there have been serious questions about the kind of preparations that are being made in the U.S. administration ahead of a possible negotiation with Iran on the nuclear file. Lately, there are growing indications that even if preparations are underway in the White House or State Department, President Donald Trump seems to view himself as capable of solving the problem on his own, even in a single meeting with Iran's president Hassan Rohani. References by the president to North Korea raise concern that he is viewing both negotiations in a similar fashion, which could have very negative implications for dealing with Iran.

First of all, in contrast to the many analysts that have already pronounced Trump's maximum pressure campaign a failure, this is not the case. The very fact that there is talk of a possible negotiation is the result of the pressure campaign. If the Trump administration had not changed course on Iran, then the dominant message would be that Iran is upholding the deal and all is well. It is only because of the steps taken by the United States in the past two and a half years that other powers have been forced to admit that there are flaws in the deal that need to be addressed. Lately, the Europeans took a step closer to the U.S. approach: they placed the blame for the mid-September attack on the oil facilities in Saudi Arabia squarely on Iran, and in their statement, they urged Iran to address troubling issues in the nuclear and missile realms and with regard to its regional activities. The UK's new prime minister, Boris Johnson, went so far as to say the JCPOA is a bad deal, and a new deal must be negotiated. Moreover, as long as the process is ongoing, any determination of failure at this point is clearly premature.

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