



A JCPOA 2.0 will secure Iran as a threshold state but move it away from a bomb

By Danny Citrinowicz / July 12, 2024

President-elect Masoud Pezeshkian declared during his campaign that he intends to work to lift US sanctions on Iran. It is clear that the removal of sanctions on critical sectors of the Iranian economy, such as the energy sector, requires a new agreement with the West regarding the country's nuclear program. But Pezeshkian wasn't the only one who discussed the need to return to a nuclear deal. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Rafael Grossi also spoke about the need to find a replacement for the nuclear agreement known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), to which no one is adhering. But given the recent dynamics on the world stage—the Ukraine war, the Women, Life, Freedom uprising, and the October 7, 2023, terrorist attack on Israel—and the fact that Iran has been mostly unchecked, can a new nuclear deal be signed between Iran and the five world powers (the United Kingdom, China, France, Russia, and the United States) plus Germany?

Looking at the current status of talks that could potentially lead to the return to the JCPOA—from which the United States under Donald Trump withdrew in 2018, reimposing unilateral sanctions despite Tehran not violating the deal—there has been little to no progress. This failure and the fact that most restrictions on Iran, as determined in the nuclear agreement, will be removed by the October 2025 deadline—the last date the West is able to apply “snapback” sanctions—make it highly unlikely that a return to the JCPOA is on the agenda anymore, despite Grossi's claims.

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