

‘Khamenei will wait to see if Trump wins to decide Iran nuke policy,’ Iran expert says

Iran expert at INSS and at the Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, Raz Zimmt, told the Post that anyone who says that “the regime fully controls the results – this is not true.”

By Yonah Jeremy Bob / July 7, 2024

Following the surprise win of reformist Masoud Pezeshkian in Iran’s presidential election this weekend, *The Jerusalem Post* interviewed multiple experts about what the change means for Tehran, Israel, and the world.

Iran expert at INSS and at the Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, Raz Zimmt, told the *Post* that anyone who says “the regime fully controls the results – this is not true.

“The Iranian regime completes its intervention at the stage of selecting which candidates get passed the Guardian Council. Once the Guardian Council has approved or disqualified candidates – which is its blatant intervention, then maybe the Basij [Iranian regime militia] can do propaganda, but their intervention is limited. It is a country of over 90 million people. They cannot influence more unless they forge the results themselves,” he added.

He noted that in 2009, Iran is believed to have forged the election results to give a victory to Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, but this was in a situation where the opposition was viewed as truly anti-regime.

In contrast, Pezeshkian, even with a “reformist” label, is viewed as fundamentally loyal to the regime.

According to Zimmt, the biggest open question in this run-off election was voter turnout. Provided that voter turnout would be higher than in the first round – and it dropped from around 40% turnout to around 50% turnout – the chances of Pezeshkian winning grew significantly.

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