

Supplement

# GEOSTRATEGIC PULSE

at No 263,264, 20 July 2018



**“THE IRANIAN APOCALYPSE”:**

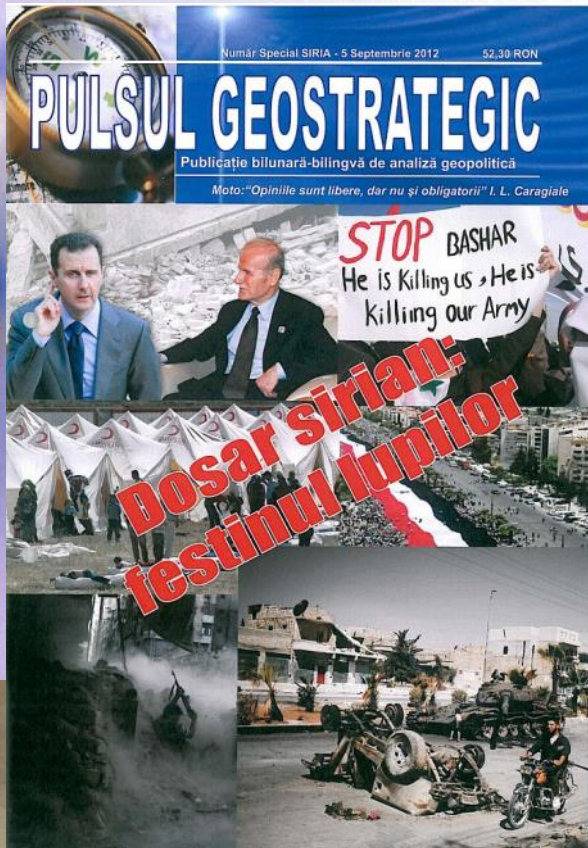
**REALITY SHOW OR... REALITY AND SHOW?**



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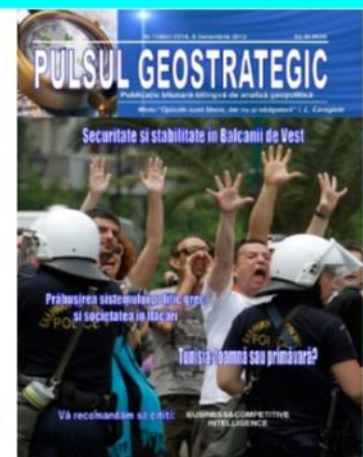
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**"THE IRANIAN APOCALYPSE":**  
**REALITY SHOW OR... REALITY AND SHOW?**

**Reza SHAHRESTANI**

**"Amad" project - a preamble**

On the evening of April 30th, on the stage of one of the halls of the Israeli Ministry of Defense in Tel Aviv, in a very well orchestrated setting and with the same known baritone and calm voice, prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu proved once more his orator's and theatrical talent and succeeded in a 20 minute only demonstration-speech to skilfully captivate his listeners' attention and breathing whom he convinced they are in front of some discoveries that "no one has ever seen". At the peak of his theatrics, with a gesture of well-versed magician, the speaker pulled the drawstring of the black canvas laid over the props brought by the rhetorician and revealed what seemed at first sight to be a kind of library full of papers and folders and a stand on which vertical stairs a rich collection of CDs shining in the floodlight was displayed. And, on a screen that unfolded instantly, fragments of dialogues, facsimiles of some documents, photos of strange objects and installations, sketches and flow-charts started to wander while the speaker revealed the mystery: all these were a consistent part of the Iranian nuclear archive captured at the beginning of this year and brought home late in the night by a brave Israeli hit squad of Mossad infiltrated "deep inside the Persian enemy front" and the purpose of the fearless and risky mission was to prove what the screen showed repeatedly in two words: Iran is lying! It was not, indeed, just any lie but the overriding proof of the fact that since decades the theocratic regime in Tehran mystified abundantly when it was pretending obstinately of not having preoccupations and programs in the military-linked nuclear field. The 55,000 pages of documents and the 183 CDs displayed to the audience offered the tangible, audible and visible proof! According to prime minister Netanyahu, the displayed materials referred to an older research program code-named "AMAD" which was aimed at manufacturing five nuclear warheads each one of 10 kilotons compatible for being fitted on conventional ballistic missiles. What the speaker did not mention was that the activities linked to "AMAD" program were stopped before 2003, namely 12 years before signing the international agreement 5+1. Moreover, the information presented and backed by Mossad's capture are neither new, nor unknown. In 2011, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) presented at the UN its annual report concerning the Iranian nuclear activities with punctual references to the the guidelines and the details regarding the installations for producing enriched uranium of the "AMAD" program developed by Iran during 2002-2003. It is everybody's knowledge and understanding, excepting maybe Benjamin Netanyahu, that it was exactly Iran's coming closer to manufacturing a nuclear warhead which was the fundamental moment determining the four Western powers – the United States, France, Great Britain and Germany plus Russia and China – to intensify their common efforts for halting Tehran's nuclear demarches.

### A necessary recourse to history

Prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu and president Donald Trump ignore or do not remember that Iran's nuclear preoccupations started 70 years ago and were strongly supported by the United States for whom the monarchical Iran represented one of the most important allies in the Middle East region and a fundamental support pillar for America in its confrontation with the former Soviet Union during the Cold War, a support strongly backed by the State of Israel which saw in Iran the sole regional ally in a hostile geopolitical environment.

Washington encouraged the Pahlavi monarchy in order to achieve an infrastructure allowing Tehran the development of programs in the nuclear field and that support was amplified particularly during 1957 – 1979 and was circumscribed to the American strategy "Atom in the service of peace", a phrase used for the first time by the American president Dwight Eisenhower in his 1953 speech from the UN General Assembly rostrum, eight years only after America manufactured the first atomic bomb. In Eisenhower's speech, his expressing the firm conviction that using the atom for humanitarian and civilizational purposes will determine the states to morally abstain from and from the clandestine deviation of nuclear technologies towards military and strongly anti-humanitarian finalities was paradoxical. On the other hand, starting from the conviction that supplying nuclear technology to states that presented a strategical interest for America will facilitate their being kept within the American sphere of influence, Dwight Eisenhower ordered backing the nuclear field of states such as Israel, India, Pakistan and Iran. The United States' intervention for bringing back on the throne the Iranian Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi Aryahmer and the removal of prime minister Mohammed Mosaddegh, due to the latter independent orientation and to his further distancing from Washington's regional policy and his sympathy towards Soviet Moscow were circumscribed to that consideration.

The nuclear assistance the United States granted to the Persian monarchy started with the setting up in Tehran of a nuclear research center which was endowed by America, too, with a small research low power reactor (5 megawatts) and supplying it with highly enriched uranium. Thus, at the beginning of 1973, the Shah announced his intention of providing his country with a nuclear electric reactor of 2,300 megawatts by the end of the century and the Iranian Nuclear Agency was set up for implementing the project. It was the period of an active development of the Iranian nuclear field manifest by consistent contracts for acquiring technology



*Benjamin Netanyahu presenting the archive documents.  
Part of the video*

and uranium through specialised companies in France, South Africa or Namibia etc, while numerous specialists were sent for specialisation in the advanced states in this field of activity so that by the end of 1979 Iran was an appreciated country in the international nuclear club. Nevertheless, the breaking off the same year of the Islamic revolution led by ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeyni and the overthrow of the regime was to fundamentally change the trajectory and the orientations of the nuclear Iran.

### **The “heretical” Iran. The pact with the devil**

For Iran’s nuclear sector, the Islamic revolution was not auspicious. On the one hand, that fundamental transformation caused a massive exodus of numerous specialists, researchers and technicians who took the route to exile. On the other hand, the very leader of the revolution, the cleric Khomeyni proved to be one of the staunchest opponents of assimilating nuclear technologies in different sectors of the national society and economy and this stance was to lead ultimately to dismantling and to abandoning the nuclear projects including or mostly those started during the Iranian Pahlevi monarchy. It was only the Iraqi-Iranian war (1980 -1988) which was to change the “spiritual leader’s” approaches and even determined him to ask for foreign assistance for resuming the Iranian infrastructure and program in this field. Thus, after the end of the war with Iraq, Tehran signed long nuclear cooperation agreements with Pakistan and China and Beijing delivered on this basis three nuclear reactors. Another contract was concluded with Russia for developing and upgrading Bushehr reactor which was decommissioned during the time of Shah Pahlevi. For its part, Washington exerted numerous and insistent pressures on China for determining the latter withdrawal from the nuclear cooperation actions with the new theocratic regime in Tehran. The failure of negotiations initiated by the Iranian side with Argentina for delivering heavy water and the production of enriched uranium was due to the same pressures. Washington did the same thing with Moscow’s new post-Soviet regime. Despite pressures exerted by the United States, the Russian Federation continued the nuclear cooperation with Tehran and one of the important projects achieved in the framework of this cooperation was the reactor in Arak for producing heavy water.

The beginning of the new millennium brought in new tensions concerning the Iranian nuclear preoccupations. It was then when the famous phrase “the axis of evil” started to circulate predominantly in connection with Iran. Then as well, a self-titled organization “The National Council of the Iranian Resistance”, in fact the political wing of the opposition Iranian Group “Mujahedin-e-Khalq” caused serious concerns when disseminated information according to which Iran has secret nuclear installations and infrastructure even at Natanz and Arak reactors and that determined AIEA to demand and carry out numerous inspection missions. That marked also the beginning of a long and contorted phase of confrontations, adversities and tensions between Iran and the international community. For avoiding the debate of this situation in the UN Security Council, Tehran initiated a series of negotiations with France, the Great Britain and Germany in order to agree upon and sign an additional protocol to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and those negotiations ended up in 2004 when the Paris Agreement for settling the issues connected to the nuclear programs was signed. The relative détente following the signature of this document was nevertheless short-lived and interrupted by CIA’s intervention which informed the international community it has several pages of documents according to which Tehran was under way

of adapting “Shehab 3” ballistic missile in order to be able to carry to target nuclear weapons. That coincided with another AIEA’s notice according to which Iran acquired and used P- type centrifuges used for enriching radioactive materials yet non registered with the Agency. The information was later confirmed and it was established that the centrifuges were supplied by Pakistan. That meant the negotiations have fallen apart at the beginning of 2006, Iran’s denouncing the Paris protocol and resuming the uranium enrichment process at Natanz reactor. At the same time, it meant as well bringing the Iranian file to the Security Council debate and that was followed by the implementation of international sanctions against Iran at the level of persons and organizations or agencies related in a way or another to the Iranian nuclear programs. In retaliation, Tehran announced kicking off the works for building a new underground unit of producing enriched uranium close to Qom, known by the name of “Fordow”, able to manufacture uranium with a high grade of enrichment (20%). Faced with this situation, the five permanent members of the Security Council plus Germany initiated new negotiations with Iran and suggested it to hand over 1,200 kg of non-enriched uranium (i.e. half the total quantity in Iran’s possession), in exchange for Tehran’s receiving 1,200 kg of low enriched uranium for civilian use. The suggestion was not accepted and the president Ahmadinejad declared his country will proceed with the process of enriching uranium up to the level of 20% and that it will build another 10 annexes designed for the same purpose. In response, Washington issued a decision imposing sanctions to all companies which would supply fuel for the Iranian reactors. It was the beginning of a new extended series of international sanctions and failures of third parties to bring Iran again to the negotiations table. All these failed due to Tehran’s insistence that all sanctions be a priori lifted as a condition for any new negotiations.

AIEA published its annual report for 2011 concerning the military dimension of the Iranian nuclear programs and a unprecedented escalation and tightening of international sanctions followed. The Iranian government and all its financial institutions were included on the list of entities involved in money laundering operations, a complete embargo was imposed on any financial transactions with the Iranian banks, the National Bank included, up to freezing all Iran’s, its government’s and National Bank’s financial and banking deposits and a severe embargo on the oil and petroleum products foreign transactions. All these and the moderate president Hassan Rohani’s taking office determined the government in Tehran to accept resuming negotiations in the 5+1 format which started at the middle of 2013 and ended by the signature, on July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2015, of what is known as the “Nuclear Agreement in 5+ 1 formula”. In accordance with the document, Iran diminished to less than a quarter the number of centrifuges at Natanz reactor, the Fordow installations were modified so that they can be used for civilian purposes only, Iran signed the Additional Protocol to TNP and abstains, for a 15 year period, from producing enriched uranium and accepted the international inspections.

At the beginning of 2016, the UN agency confirmed in its annual report that Iran fully complied with its commitments provided for in the multi-state Agreement, all the previous sanctions applied to Iran were lifted. The decision was encumbered by an exception, namely by the resolution of the American Congress requesting that every 90 days the president confirms under signature the fact that Tehran observe its commitments. This exception left room for subjective interpretations and accusations that Iran either in what concern the program of developing conventional ballistic missiles or the old accusation of sponsoring the terrorist phenomenon. This carousel of accusations and denials ended on

May 8th, 2018 with what was to become a defining political title for 2018, namely Donald Trump's decision of unilaterally denouncing the atomic cohabitation with the Iranian regime.

### **The 5+1 Agreement : chronological references**

- **July 14th, 2015:** The Agreement between the Islamic Republic of Iran, on the one side and the five permanent members of the Security Council (the United States, the Russian Federation, China, France, Great Britain) plus Germany, on the other side was signed. The agreement on lifting the American and European sanctions against Iran was signed, too.

- **October 18th, 2015:** The United States acknowledged officially the annual report of AIEA and, implicitly, diminished the sanctions imposed on Iran. The European Union, in its term, legalized lifting the anti-Iranian sanctions.

- **January 16th, 2016:** The 5+1 Agreement entered formally into force. The exports of Iranian oil was resumed without restrictions and the United States lifted completely the sanctions.

- **January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017:** Donald Trump took officially office as the president of the USA.

- **January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2017:** Iran made new tests with conventional ballistic missiles.

- **April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017:** Secretary of State Rex Tillerson signed – for the first and the last time during Trump's mandate – the acceptance by the USA of the AIEA report concerning the observance by Iran of the obligations assumed under the 5+1 Agreement.

- **May 2017:** Donald Trump signed the first decree of prolonging the sanctions imposed to Iran.

- **July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017:** Donald Trump rejected for the first time the ratification by the USA of the report concerning the observance by Iran of the Nuclear Agreement.

- **May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018:** Donald Trump signed the decree of the USA's unilaterally withdrawing from the Nuclear Agreement with Iran.

- **May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2018:** Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced the list of the 12 preconditions imposed by the United States for accepting the renegotiation of the Nuclear Treaty. The preconditions were rejected by Iran through president Hassan Rouhani's voice.

### **Barack Obama's illusions**

The Barack Obama's approach to Iran's "nuclear file" and the efforts the former American president exerted towards an agreement with the regime in Tehran had a double strategic motivation. On the one hand, starting from the estimations according to which Iran needed approximatively a year only to assemble the nuclear bomb, Barack Obama decided that the only alternative to an agreement with Iran was a war neither America and nor its allies were prepared and ready to accept. On the other hand, president Obama betted on the possibility that offering Iran economic benefits and the perspective of a non-conflictual integration into the international community were attracting enough for the Iranian re-

gime to become more flexible and more moderate in a time interval between 10 and 15 years. In the Obama administration's approach, the Iranian issue was to be exclusively limited to the nuclear programs file only, without extending to other divergent issues such as ballistic missiles of the theocratic regime's support of the radical-terrorist militias and entities.

As it was to be found at the time, Barack Obama's reasoning was not met too favourably by America's traditional allies in the Middle East and particularly Israel and Saudi Arabia. Yet the fact that Barack Obama did not take into consideration their sensitiveness and then negotiating and signing the agreement with Iran were reasons enough for igniting the spark of a unceasing political war Israel waged against Obama, a war conducted and fostered by prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu who did not hesitate, in a unprecedented gesture, to severely criticize the USA president before the Congress in Washington. A war whereby all the panoplies Israel had were mobilized, from the media and propaganda apparatus to Israel's foreign institutions, Jewish communities and pressure groups in the USA up to personalities of the American political, financial and economic life. The billionaire Donald Trump, a declared opponent of Barack Obama's policy and of the Nuclear Agreement with Iran was among the latter. So that when he arrived at the helm of the Administration, the new tenant of the White House, together with his team of advisors and secretaries launched without delay a strategy of erasing Barack Obama's political inheritance and of the foreign affairs model promoted by the latter, including in what concern the relationship with the Islamic Republic of Iran and the 5+1 Agreement concluded with that country. The first meeting between Benjamin Netanyahu and the president Donald Trump, that took place at the White House on March 5th, 2017 on the occasion of the Israeli prime minister attendance of the annual reunion of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) highlighted and established the perfect consonance between the two political men's visions concerning a tough approach to the "Iranian question".

Today, one may state without fear of being wrong that that meeting "initialled" the total consensus between Israel and the Trump Administration as well as the general coordinates of the joint action for Iran's "containment", coordinates which details were to be agreed upon later in the framework of the meetings that took place between Donald Trump's close people and the Israeli officials among whom a dynamic role was played by the Israeli minister of De-

defense Avigdor Lieberman. It is in this framework that Israel obtained from the Administration in Washington the assurance and commitment of unconditional support of Israeli approaches to Iran and its regional allies not only diplomatically and particularly at the Security Council but also for preventing the Russian Federation's and the European



*From divergence...*



community's reactions to the military actions carried out by the Jewish state against the Iranian military presence on the chessboard of the Syrian civil war as well as for solving other files without a direct or indirect connection to the Iranian nuclear programs, from halting the production of conventional ballistic missiles to the "big deal" concerning the "final solution" of the Palestinian disputed claims or the removal of the Iranian theocratic regime from the entire strategic equation of the Middle East.

### **A double bet: John Bolton or Mujahedin - e - Khalq?**

A serious question raised by the war – that became an almost "personal matter" – Donald Trump and Benjamin Netanyahu are waging against Iran – is that none of them has ever approached the simple and deeply rooted logic according to which when something is erased it should be replaced by something else. And ignoring this necessity is due to the apparently simple fact namely that for Donald Trump and Benjamin Netanyahu the political logic through which it is asserted and argued that the existing dysfunctions between the Islamic Iran and the West are not due to the Iranian ambitions of acquiring a nuclear arsenal but particularly due to certain practices outside the "nuclear file" proper, namely the intense race the regime in Tehran is engaged in in the field of conventional arming with its materialized component of ballistic missiles production, then financing and managing some fighting entities the West and Israel condemn as being terrorist and, not the least, the ambition of the Iranian Islamic regime of expansion in the regional geography of the Middle East including the achievement of the famous "Shiite arch" as a bridge between the eastern shores of the Gulf and the "warm waters" of the Mediterranean Sea.

It goes without saying that the intransigence and the maximalist and prohibitive conditions Washington and Israel are raising to the Iranian rulers would be never accepted by the latter. And that leads to the reactivation of the old practice of re-dimensioning the international sanctions, this time for being, as Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, put it "of a unprecedented historical severity" in the hope, which is not above uncertainties, that such measures will impose to the Iranians a more moderate and responsive attitude towards the American and western thinking or will determine ample bringing about, in the final analysis, the implosion of the theocratic regime. Such an approach is strongly influenced by the so-called "bet on John Bolton's logic", Donald Trump's new National Security Advisor and one of the most radical anti-Iranian hawks within the president's staff.

John Bolton's anti-Iranian adversity is not something new and his propensity for changing the regime in Tehran was explicitly expressed a decade ago when in a fulminating speech exposed his vision on the man-



*... To strategic friendship*

ner of solving the "Persian syndrome". What is less known is the fact (according to Al-Jazeera Qatari TV Station, May 24th, 2018) that the conference was financially supported by the American branch of the Iranian opposition organization „Mujahedin-e-Khalq" which paid to the speaker several tens of thousands of dollars. What John Bolton seems did not had in mind is the fact that the common Iranian will think over several times before acting for changing a religious dictatorship with another one bred and paid for by the West.

The said group was active during the 1979 Khomeynist revolution and, according to certain historians or people who lived the then events, it seems it has been involved in the attack on the American Embassy in Tehran which caused the well known American hostages crisis. As the group lost the struggle for power after the fall of monarchy to the mollahs, they withdrew in Iraq and fought alongside Saddam Hussein's army against the Iranian army. The few thousands members of the movement who remained in the Iraqi prisons were executed by the new Islamist regime as punishment for "national treason". Due to its initial anti-American stance, "Mujahedin - e -Khalq" was listed by Washington and the European Union as terrorist organization and then, in 2008 and, respectively in 2012, was taken out off the list and then moved to France and Germany where they exerted sustained financial and propagandistic efforts for correcting their image, including by cultivating relations with influent personalities in the United States among whom the former Home Security Advisor Francis Townsend, the former governor of the State of Vermont, Howard Dean, the former mayor of New York, Rudolph Giuliani or the former ambassador and current presidential advisor John Bolton. There are many analysts who appreciate that a bet on the Iranian opposition organization as alternative to the current Islamist regime in Tehran would be but one more of the failed options the administrations in Washington betted in the conflict with Iran.

On the background of the reignition of the American-Iranian tensions and of the worsened tone used in the mutual conflictual interlinking between the West/Israel - Iran, it is doubtful that the new package of sanctions applied to the Islamist regime will be sufficient in itself for opening the road to an overthrow or implosion of the ayatollahs' regime or for only that the latter accepts a new "deal" tackling comprehensively all the Americans' and Israeli's as well as those connected to the ensemble of charges brought to Iran currently.



John Bolton, National Security Advisor of the Trump Administration

### Thus Spake Pompeo. What will Iran do?

For the first time since his appointment as head of the American diplomacy on April 26th, the new USA's Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, delivered on May 21st, his first fundamental speech on foreign policy dedicated almost entirely to

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Iran and the sanctions imposed by the USA</b></p> <p><b>Sanctions lifted in 2016 and reinstated on May, 12th, 2018</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oil embargo</li> <li>• Penalties in the field of insurance and transports</li> <li>• Embargou on rare and precious metals transactions</li> <li>• Penalties applied individually and on other companies of the private sectorul</li> </ul> <p><b>Sanctions that were maintained</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embargo on arms and on the missiles technolog</li> <li>• Penalties linked to the non-observance of the human rights and support of terrorism</li> </ul> <p><b>Extra penalties applied after signing the nuclear agreement</b></p> <p>Penalties on persons and companies linked to the program of producing conventional ballistic missiles</p> <p>The Islamic Revolutionary guards were entered the list of terrorist organizations</p>	<p>the most "viral" conflicted situation in which the strategy of Trump Administration is involved in the Middle East – that caused by the United States' unilateral withdrawal from the "nuclear" agreement with Iran in the 5+1 format and the sanctions imposed on the Islamic Republic, sanctions which, according to the high American official, could be the most drastic of the sort since the history of diplomacy was conceived as another way of waging war knows this instrument of "persuasion through pressure". As he rememberd involuntarily of the policy of sanctions promoted by the administrations in Washington against North Korea or the 13 conditions formulated by Saudi Arabia and its satellites in the Arabic-Persian Gulf for achieving the reconciliation with the Qatari emirate, Pompeo's expose was, in its essence, an inventory of conditions Iran must fully abide as a preamble to a possible agreement of Trump Administration on a renegotiation of substance of the multilateral Agreement signed in 2015. The complete reading of the Secretary of State's pleading highlights</p>
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not only that it was based on the principle "all or nothing" but the scope of the 12 letters of formal notice exceeds by far the topic under discussion and developed practically a summum of maximal conditions which virtual fulfilment would mean finally the collapse of the regime in Tehran and leaving Iran out of the geopolitical and geostrategic equation of the Middle East. Such a conclusion is upheld as well by the fact that in the offer made to the Iranian side, the Administration in Washington avoids any reference to what it will do in this case and any assurance that it has the availability and the opening for compromise or the nature of guarantees it offers to Iran in exchange of the fulfilment of the conditions imposed which Mike Pompeo himself characterized as "unrealistic". What are the 12 com-

mandments and what are the chances, be it minimal, that the regime in Tehran obeys?

1. The first condition: *"Iran should submit to the International Atomic Energy Agency a complete and detailed report on the military dimension of its nuclear programs and on its definite and verifiable renunciation to such activities"*.

This condition supposes Iran's acceptance of the fact it has disinformed in the past on its nuclear preoccupations and, at the same time, to prove with credible and controllable evidence when and at what stage these activities ceased. It is difficult to believe that a nation may recognize the fact it lied about a topic or another and such a recognition becomes the more unacceptable for Iran as it prejudices the personal infallibility and probity of the Islamic Iran's supreme spiritual guide evidence.

2. The second condition: *"Iran should definitely cease the process of uranium enrichment and any activity of processing plutonium and of producing heavy water"*.

The condition supposes Iran's renouncing to any activity in the nuclear field which has as finalities civilian and energy use. To the same extent, it is about Iran's renouncing to all previous investments in nuclear programs which exceed by far the strict sphere of the military character the United States of America had in view.

3. The third condition: *"Iran should permit unlimited access of the International Atomic Energy Agency's inspectors to all the objectives of concern on the entire country's territory"*.

4. *"Iran should definitely cease the proliferation of ballistic missiles and halt the tests or the development of the missiles systems able to carry nuclear warheads to targets"*.

The issue here is that any ballistic missile strong enough to carry conventional charges could be adapted for carrying nuclear warheads. Forbidding de plano the ballistic missiles means keeping Iran to lower levels not only compared to the United States but also to the Arab neighbouring states strongly armed by the United States' military, logistical and technological assistance. It is difficult to suppose that not only Iran but also any state concerned by its own national defense would ever accept such a unbalanced power equilibrium.

5. *"Iran has to free all the United States' and our partners' and allies' citizens detained for counterfeited charges"*.

Although it has nothing to do with the issue of the "nuclear file", this condition supposes the acceptance of the fact that no conviction of prison in Iran is based on a valid charge. It is hard to accept that the Iranian tribunals are sending to courts the detainees for the simple fact they are Americans or Americans' allies.

6. *"Iran should cease the support it grants to the terrorist groups in the Middle East, including the Lebanese Hezbollah, the Palestinian movement Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad"*.

Supporting the terrorist phenomenon is, indeed, reprehensible, yet making nominal references, the Secretary of State Pompeo leaves the impression he is moving away from the subject and adds an extra condition as he nominates something new. Were it to remind most or all the entities suspected of terrorism in the region, it would mean to nominate most or all allied pro-Iranian groups in the region and outside it. The question is to what extent Iran will recognize itself as sponsor and funder of the terrorist phenomenon.

**7.** *"Iran should respect the sovereignty of the Iraqi government and allow disarming, demobilizing and integrating the Shiite militias in Iraq's armed and security forces".*

The condition, although it glides once more besides the central issue, mirrors a real necessity for the process of pacifying Iraq and of strengthening its national sovereignty and independence. In this respect, the clarification of the statute of the Iraqi Shiite militias should be requested not by the government in Washington but by the government in Baghdad especially that the Iraqi political forces are favourable and directly interested in solving this thorny issue after last May general elections.

**8.** *"Iran should, as well, cease the military assistance granted to the Houthi rebels in Yemen and act for a peaceful solution of the conflict in this country".*

A unacceptable condition, as well, for the regime in Tehran for which complying with such a request would mean surrendering to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates without this opening, too, a perspective of settling the old sectarian and political divergences opposing the Iranian Shiism and the Sunni Wahhabism of the Arab monarchies in the Gulf.

**9.** This ninth condition request Iran *"to withdraw all military forces and formations acting in Syria under Iranian command from the entire Syrian territory"*.

Beside the fact that Syria was Iran's sole regional ally in the war with Saddam Hussein's Iraq, the condition does not take into consideration the Iranian argument that its involvement in the Syrian internal conflict took place at the express request of the government in Damascus and leaving Syria could be achieved only at the official request of the government in Damascus. Moreover, this maximalist condition becomes unacceptable as it requests Iran that after seven years to abandon a war which it is close to win together with its Syrian and Russian allies.

**10.** *"At the same time, Iran should cease the support for the Talibans movement and other terrorists in Afghanistan and in the region and to abstain from offering shelter to the leaders of Al-Qaida network"*.

Such a condition could be negotiated only to the extent a perspective that the government in Kabul wins the confrontation with the Talibans is there or that an end of the war in the country does not harm Iran's security interests in the Asian regional proximity. Once more, through Mike Pompeo's words, the Trump Administration requests Iran all without offering anything in exchange and strengthen the apprehension that the American inventory of conditionalities was knowingly drawn up so that it could not be accepted and to offer Donald Trump the argument of continuing his anti-Iranian program with the fundamental finality of eroding up to the collapse of the theocratic regime.

**11.** *"Iran should cease the assistance the Qods Forces of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard grant to the terrorists and to the partner activists all over the world"*.

As it is the case with the ballistic missiles, the Iranian strategy of managing the asymmetric military and human potentials and the non-state players in the "franchise" conflicts in which the Islamic Republic of Iran is involved, this condition could not be accepted. This element represents at the same time a key-aspect of the Iranian security system Iran is not willing to give up without receiving in exchange a wide range of security guarantees including from the America-Israel duo.

12. "Iran should cease to represent a threat for its neighbours of whom most are America's allies. That includes as well the threats of destroying Israel and the missile salvo against Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates as well as the attempts to the safety of the international navigation and the destructive cyber attacks".

The adversity towards Israel represents the cornerstone of the Iranian ideology and doctrine yet a support leverage for the discursive allegations according to which Iran acts not



only for defending its own interests but also for the defense and prosperity of Islam and for the Palestinian cause. As far as the interlinking with the Saudi and Emirati monarchies, it is circumscribed, from the Iranian perspective, both to the old territorial and sectarian disputes but also to the conventional arms race in which the three states are engaged starting with the 1980s.

After analyzing the conditions the American administration made to the regime in Tehran, Anthony H. Cordesman of the Center for Strategic International Studies (CSIS), assessed that the way they were thought and edited, these 12 conditions presented by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo are in principle non-negotiable as a whole to the extent which, even taken each one in turn they represent in themselves as many political and economic war declarations to the regime in Tehran.

As it was anticipated, the Iranian reply was not late to come and it was given through the voice of the president Hassan Rohani who rejected in tough terms the American claims characterized as an explicit attempt of overthrowing the theocratic regime. "Iran will not accept being humiliated and it has the capacity, through the will of its nation, to resist these unacceptable pressures". After the "Pompeo episode", come the 180 days respite the USA granted both to Iran and to the foreign states engaged in political and economic relations with the Islamic Republic. An interlude in which, certainly, both the Iranian side and the European Union and also the Russian Federation will not stay idle so that the "nuclear" dispute awaits a hot and unpredictable summer in which the realities could be not only opportunities of political shows any longer.



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