

Iran, Disinformation, and “Sanctions of Mass Destruction”

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Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Media Disinformation](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

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The United States has done it again: reneged on a signed agreement. President Donald Trump has drop kicked the Iran Nuclear deal (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, JCPOA).

The examples of US government chicanery are myriad. In 1972, American president Richard Nixon and his Soviet counterpart Leonid Brezhnev agreed on an Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty that limited strategic defense systems. In December 2001, president George W Bush gave notice of US intent to withdraw from the ABM treaty. When Nixon signed, the USSR was a military superpower. Russia was still economically crippled, recovering from the collapse of the USSR and communism, when Bush opted out. The result was, [according to Russia](#), the development of sophisticated next-gen hypersonic and nuclear weapons.

In 1994, US ambassador Robert Gallucci and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea vice-minister Kang Sok-ju signed the Framework Agreement. That agreement stipulated that the DPRK cease operation and construction of nuclear reactors that were part of a covert nuclear weapons program. In exchange the US would construct two proliferation-resistant nuclear power reactors for the DPRK and supply it with heavy fuel oil pending completion of the reactors. In January 2002, Bush calls the DPRK a part of the “axis of evil.” In April 2002, Bush stated he would not certify the DPRK’s compliance with the Agreed Framework. In November 2002, the US announces a halt to fuel shipments to the DPRK. In December 2002, the DPRK announced it would restart the nuclear facilities and later orders the IAEA inspectors out of the country. In January 2003, the DPRK left the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty. Today, the DPRK is a nuclear-weapons state with ICBM capability.

In 2015, Iran reached a deal with the P5+1 group of world powers (the US, UK, France, China, Russia and Germany) to limit its nuclear program and permit international inspections in exchange for the lifting of economic sanctions against the country. Iran has always been found in compliance with the agreement; nevertheless, Trump predictably pulled out of the JCPOA.

It was predictable given the US’s longstanding history of treaty breaking, starting with the [Indigenous nations](#) who were dispossessed by the European settler-colonists. It was predictable given Trump’s fetishism with Israel, whose prime minister Binyamin Netanyahu has been an unrelenting warmonger against Iran. It is predictable given the team that Trump assembled. For example, Trump’s national security advisor John Bolton, an anti-Iran deal hawk, was George W Bush’s undersecretary of state for arms control and international security when the Agreed Framework was killed. This outcome was favored by Bolton who [wrote](#),

“This was the hammer I had been looking for to shatter the Agreed Framework.”

The *Washington Post* [speculates](#) that this may mean war. Yes, it may well, and Israel has seized upon Trump’s announcement to [attack Iranian troops](#) in Syria.

Iran says it will stay in the JCPOA. What about the rest of the P5+1? Surely Russia and China will not take part in a continuance of sanctions against Iran. Europe seems disposed to [honor the deal](#) as well. That the US could sanction its NATO and European partners is dubious, and such sanctions wouldn’t work. As the US threatened trade war against China revealed, tariffs imposed by one side can also be imposed by the other side.

The Destructiveness of Disinformation and Sanctions

That economic sanctions could debilitate a country’s economy is clear. As such economic sanctions are often considered an act of war.

Ahmad Noroozi, international PR manager for Execution of Imam Khomeini’s Order (EIKO), laments the effects of sanctions:

“The sanctions have had hard impacts on Iranian civilians despite the claims of targeting Iran’s government. The sanctions lifted under the JCPOA, are coming back into motion again under different pretexts. Every now and then, a new organization in Iran comes under the light to step up pressures on the country.”

Noroozi says EIKO is normally under attack even though:

“The organization’s mission is to help the poor families of Iran and doing charity works.”

Reuters, however, [claims](#) EIKO is a slushfund for the Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Noroozi points out that EIKO has always been subject to [disinformation campaigns](#).

Disinformation has been a staple of US imperialism. There are several examples of false flags/disinformation, ranging from the Gulf of Tonkin missile attack; the phantom WMD in Iraq; the alleged Skripal Novichok poisoning affair attributed to Russia, without a shred of evidence presented (and plenty of refutations of the British government claims); and the recent chemical attack in Douma, Syria, staged by the White Helmets. Such disinformation is often used as a *casus belli* and many people wind up murdered as a result.

That the sanctions would harm the citizenry – even children – is of negligible concern to the US. The then-US ambassador to the United Nations, Madeleine Albright, quipped that the death of half-a-million Iraqi children was a price worth paying to achieve US policy objectives.

In their *Foreign Affairs* article, “Sanctions of Mass Destruction,” John Mueller and Karl Mueller [wrote](#) about Americans’ insouciance to the deaths of Iraqis:

It is interesting that this loss of human life has failed to make a great

impression in the United States. Americans clearly do not blame the people of Iraq for that country's actions: even at the height of the Gulf War, 60 percent said they held the Iraqi people innocent of responsibility for Saddam's policies. Yet the massive death toll among Iraqi civilians has stirred little public protest, and hardly any notice.

Some of the inattention may derive from a lack of concern about foreign lives. Although Americans are extremely sensitive to American casualties, they – like others – often seem quite insensitive to casualties suffered by those on the opposing side, whether military or civilian.

The writers noted that economic sanctions are a far deadlier than WMDs:

“economic sanctions ... may have contributed to more deaths during the post-Cold War era than all weapons of mass destruction throughout history.”

Since the use of WMDs are prohibited because of their massive lethality, why then are economic sanctions, which are of greater lethality, still used?

Lastly, if the sanctions of mass destruction should effect a dire lethality in Iran, then what comes after?

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Michel Chossudovsky

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