

# Iran Is Preparing for a Long Siege as the Global Squeeze Begins

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*Today the harshest and highest level economic and energy sanctions that can be imposed on any country are being imposed unilaterally on Iran. The US establishment will try its best to bring the Islamic Republic to its knees and Tehran will do its best to cross the US minefield. Whatever the outcome, Iran will never submit to Washington's twelve conditions.*

Iran is not a fledgeling country ready to collapse at the imposition of the first tight sanctions, nor will Iran allow its oil exports to be frozen without reacting. In fact, US and UN sanctions against Iran date to the beginning of the Islamic Revolution and the fall of the Shah in 1979.

No doubt the Iranian economy will be affected. Nevertheless, Iranian unity today has reached new heights. President Trump has managed to bring reformists and radicals together under the same umbrella!

Iranian General Qassem Soleimani has said to President Hassan Rouhani:

"You walk and we stand ahead of you. Don't respond to Trump's provocations because he is insolent and not at your level. I shall face him myself".

Rouhani believes "US policy and its new conspiracy will fail". All responsible figures in the Iranian regime are now united under the leadership of Imam Ali Khamenei against the US policy whose aim is to curb the regime.

Under the previous worldwide sanctions regime, Iran began developing missile technology and precision weapons. Iran has never yielded in support of its allies because these alliances are an integral part of its ideology. Today, Tehran is not standing alone against the US and is waiting to see what course global sanctions will take before reacting. Officials in Tehran, convinced that Trump will win a second term, are preparing for a long siege.

Sayyed Ali Khamenei said his country will never strike any deal with the US and won't be a party to any future agreement because the US is fundamentally untrustworthy. Iran relies on the unity of its own citizens and on the support of its partners in the Middle East, Europe (a crucial strategic ally), and Asia. Europe, notably, is trying to disengage itself from the US sanctions, but so far with little success. Its leaders are begging in vain for an exemption for trade in food and medicine to reduce the population's suffering.

Trump is determined – even if these measures are harmful to the European economy – to prevent any transactions between Iran and Europe. This is one of the main reasons why the old continent is looking at implementing a long-term strategy specifically to disengage itself

from the Swift messaging service used by banks and financial institutions for all trade transactions worldwide.

The UK, Germany and France have stood firm against the US establishment's decisions and sanctions for the first time since World War II. Trump shows no concern for principles, laws or international agreements (like the Nuclear Deal) and is instead engaged in a naked quest for profits. The US is trying to maintain its global hegemonic power and its long-standing efforts for world domination, at the expense of its European partners and its Middle Eastern allies who are constantly bled by the US's extortion racket.

Several European companies have an interest in ignoring Trump's warnings: they could decide to trade with Iran solely on the basis of local currency exchange, provided there are no US-based assets involved.

One of the main problems remains Iraq. The US aims to create internal struggle within Baghdad's political circles, notably between pro-Iran and pro-USA factions. Nevertheless, Mesopotamia will never close its doors on Iran's trade and will maintain the flow of goods between the two countries, regardless of consequences. If Trump decides to deal more harshly with Iraq, he will push the country further into the arms of Iran.

Trump has already shown signs of weakness: he granted a temporary sanctions waiver to eight countries, including Russia, China, Turkey, Japan, India and South Korea. Russia, China and Turkey have announced that they will not abide by any sanctions, with or without US blessing. This means that Iran will not be completely surrounded; these countries will trade extensively with the Islamic Republic. Iranian exports of 2.5 million barrels per day will be reduced but will never be shut down completely. Thus US plans—to hit Iran's economy, change the regime, stop innovative military production and curtail Iranian support to its allies in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Afghanistan—are not feasible.

The "Islamic State" (ISIS) terrorist group managed to sell its oil for several years. Stolen oil from Iraq and Syria reached the Mediterranean and was even exported outside the Middle East. By the same token, a long-established country like Iran will not find it very difficult to export its oil.

Trump's sanctions have terrorised his allies more than his enemies. These allies are seriously looking today for other alternatives. What was inconceivable has become a reality; US actions respect no limits or boundaries. The new sanctions will help Iran to become even more independent and self-sufficient in many fields. Furthermore, the number of countries concerned by and determined to escape US hegemony is increasing. The US is showing a few diplomatic skills: in reality, it has become a giant, indeed, very strong, entity with a lot of muscle but few brains.

At the same time, there are strong indications that the US is extremely concerned about its worldwide position. Europe is not hiding signs of rebellion against the US; China and Russia are emerging as potential world leaders, while Turkey may reassert a leadership role in the divided Arab world. These countries will certainly remain outside the US orbit, and many other countries, realising that their interests are no longer served by an alliance with the United States, will slowly but surely join them.

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