

“Israel” Will Never Let Iran Build a Pipeline to Syria Unless Russia Is Involved

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It's impossible to imagine any realistic scenario where “Israel” would sit back and let its number one enemy strengthen its influence in the region unless Russia was involved as a stakeholder for keeping Iran in check.

Iran is [reportedly](#) exploring the possibility of building a pipeline across Iraq to Syria to complement the plan that it earlier proposed for constructing a [railway corridor](#) connecting all three of them. Each of these countries has the sovereign and international legal right to enhance cooperation with one another as they see fit, but it's unrealistic to imagine any scenario where their shared “[Israeli](#)” foe would sit back and let the Islamic Republic strengthen its influence in the region through these hard infrastructure projects unless Russia was involved. The self-professed “Jewish State” has already proven its willingness to take direct military action against its enemy and its allies in the Mideast through its recent high-profile bombings in Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon, so it's inconceivable that it would passively let these pipeline and railway plans proceed.

Both projects represent fixed targets that are extremely easy for aircraft, cruise missiles, and even local proxies to destroy, all of which “Israel” could throw at them in order to stop them dead in their tracks. Iran doesn't have the military capability to defend either the pipeline or railroad across this vast distance, and any moves that it takes in this direction would surely be thwarted before they can make any tangible difference in deterring “Israel”. Tel Aviv will stop at nothing to enforce the “containment” of Iran that was officially put into practice by Washington following its withdrawal from the nuclear agreement, and it therefore obviously has the US' full support in doing so. Neither “Israel” nor the US want Iran to circumvent the unilateral sanctions via its pipeline, nor to receive economic relief from the same via the railroad, so there's no doubt that they'll take action.

That being the case, one has to wonder whether Iran seriously thinks that it could succeed with these plans or not. The Islamic Republic is known for its principled rhetoric in defense of its national interests and also humanitarian ones abroad such as Palestine that it regards as inseparable from its own, though it only rarely ever delivers on what it says that it's set out to achieve. That's not to say that Iran “lies”, but just that it has a soft power stake in keeping the morale of its regional supporters high, such as envisaging a “New Middle East” where its closest ones could cooperate with one another through pipeline and railway connectivity projects. There's no doubt that Iran would like this to happen, but it's dubious whether or not it can actually pull it off given the aforementioned analysis about “Israel” and the US' interests in stopping it.

Interestingly, there might be one possible solution to this seemingly intractable problem, and it's if Iran contracts its Russian partner to become a stakeholder in these two regional initiatives. Russia has recently tried to "[balance](#)" between Iran and "Israel" though Moscow has lately shown that it's [much closer](#) to the latter than is publicly recognized by most, but nevertheless, it might have both financial and strategic interests in getting involved that could convince Tel Aviv to allow these projects to proceed. To explain, Russia's energy and railway companies are world-renowned for their expertise, and Moscow wouldn't pass up an opportunity for its state-owned companies to strike profitable deals that could potentially bring billions to the national budget if it had the chance to do so after being invited to participate.

From the strategic perspective, Russia would be expanding its influence in the region to the point of [possibly even challenging](#) Iran's, albeit in a "friendly" way but one that would align with the objectives of its Western partners in the event that a "[New Detente](#)" between them is finally struck. That might at first sound strange to countenance considering that it doesn't initially make sense that facilitating Iranian oil exports could result in the country's "containment", but upon further thought, making Iran more dependent on Russia via Moscow's participation in this project would allow the Eurasian Great Power to indirectly wield even more influence over the Islamic Republic itself which could later be leveraged on behalf of its Western partners. The same logic goes for the prospective railway between Iran, Iraq, and Syria, too.

That said, it's still unlikely that Iran would invite Russia to jointly construct these projects and that "Israel" would even agree to it since Tel Aviv has no reason to "compromise" on what it considers to be its pressing "national security" interests in militarily "containing" Iran after it recently once again proved the effectiveness of its heavy-handed approach. Iran also views Russia as a strategic competitor of sorts despite their anti-terrorist cooperation in Syria, so it would be reluctant to sell a stake in this project to its energy and connectivity rival unless it was truly desperate. As such, these plans will likely remain on the drawing board for the indefinite future since they're politically unfeasible in the current context, which doesn't appear to be changing anytime soon, but their significance rests in inspiring Iran's supporters across the region to not lose hope in the future.

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