

JCPOA Talks Fall Short, US Middle East Military Buildup. Bolton Seeks Partners for War on Iran

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JCPOA nuclear deal Joint Commission members include Iran, Britain, China, France, Germany and Russia.

On Friday, talks in Vienna involving officials of these countries fell short, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi saying the following at their conclusion:

“It was a step forward, but it is still not enough and not meeting Iran’s expectations” for normal trade relations between Tehran and European countries, affirmed under JCPOA nuclear deal provisions.

“(W)e took a step forward but there is still a long way to reach Iran’s set targets,” Araghchi added.

Days earlier, Central Bank of Iran (CBI) Governor Abdolanser Hemmati said

“Instex will not work miracles. Monetary transactions should be done via it and for that Europeans should purchase our oil or open credit lines for Iran,” adding:

“Europeans should buy oil from us as did Italy and Greece in the past or in other case, they can provide us with \$10 million to \$15 million credit lines in order to have monetary transactions take place in INSTEX to meet Iran’s needs under the US sanctions.”

What was presented in Vienna excludes exports of Iranian oil to European markets, making it unacceptable to Tehran.

Separately, Iran established a STFI counterpart system to Instex, aiming to more greatly facilitate trade.

As long as acceptable progress toward normalizing relations remains unachieved, Iran will continue reducing its JCPOA commitments.

They only work if all signatories to the agreement fulfill their obligations — what Russia and China have done, not European countries.

The EU’s Instex trade mechanism with Iran, bypassing dollar transactions through the SWIFT interbank financial transactions system, is supposed to circumvent illegally imposed US

sanctions.

Initially it's designed to focus on "pharmaceutical, medical devices and agri-food goods," according to a statement, adding:

It "aims in the long term to be open to economic operators from third countries who wish to trade with Iran and the E3 (as well as other European nations) continue to explore how to achieve this objective."

Since announcing Instex in February, EU countries delayed its implementation, showing it's largely a rhetorical gesture without fulfillment the way it should be.

Iranian Judiciary Chief Ayatollah Sadeq Amoli Larijani earlier slammed the system, saying "(a)fter nine months of dawdling and negotiations, European countries have come up with a limited-capacity mechanism not for exchange of money with Iran, but to supply food and medicine."

As it now stands, it does not facilitate the sale of Iranian oil, gas, and other products to European markets, what's fundamental to make it work.

According to Russia's Foreign Ministry following the Vienna meeting,

"experts from the member nations have been tasked to elaborate practical measures to make it possible for Iran to export low enriched uranium and heavy water in bypassing the US sanctions."

Days earlier, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said Moscow and other JCPOA signatories will take steps to counter illegal US sanctions on Iran — what Europe hasn't done so far, leaving serious doubts about its intentions.

Iran said steps it will take ahead depend on what policies European countries adopt. So far they're complying with illegal US sanctions instead of rejecting them.

Separately, while Pompeo and Bolton are seeking coalition partners for war on Iran, the Pentagon is increasing US military strength in the Middle East.

Additional stealth F-22 warplanes were deployed to Qatar — on the phony pretext of "defending American forces and interests," despite no regional threats to the US except invented ones.

Trump regime officials warning about a "credible threat" from Iran is a bald-faced Big Lie. An aircraft carrier strike group, B-52 bombers capable of carrying nuclear weapons, and around 1,000 ground troops were deployed to the region in early June.

In late June, the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit arrived in the Middle East, along with an amphibious transport vessel. A CENTCOM statement about the deployment was posted and removed.

The USS Boxer deployed to the region carries an air squadron comprised of attack helicopters and AV-8B Harrier II strike aircraft. It's able to launch Sea Sparrow anti-ship missiles.

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IGRC) commander-in-chief Hossein Salami said the country's anti-ship missiles can strike targets "with great precision..."

A Final Comment

On Friday, the US Senate defeated an amendment to National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) legislation, requiring Trump to seek congressional approval to attack Iran or other countries.

The measure required a 60-vote super-majority for adoption, falling one vote short. GOP Majority Leader Senator Mitch McConnell opposed the amendment, saying its "radical new restrictions (sic) (would leave Trump's) hands...tied" if adopted.

Things are moving incrementally toward possible preemptive US war on Iran, risking likely devastating consequences if the Trump regime goes this far.

He threatened "overwhelming force to "obliterate" Iran if "anything American" is attacked.

Iranian Foreign Minister Zarif responded, saying his threat amounts to "genocide," adding: "(W)hoever begins war will not be the one ending it."

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