

Netanyahu Took Trump to New Heights of Global Tension and Dropped Him

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Israel prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu claimed he personally [convinced](#) the US president Donald Trump to abandon the Iran nuclear deal, known as the JCPOA agreement, and wished Iran to “[disappear with the help of God](#)”. Israel is much more experienced in dealing with the Middle East than the current US president and his entire team in this administration. Even if Israel itself was not convinced, they evidently managed to convince the Americans that a show of US “superior force with the will to use it” would compel Iran to back off and submit to the US 12 conditions [dictated](#) by Secretary Pompeo, as Israel’s former Ambassador to Washington [Danny Ayalon](#) said would happen. Israel, the instigator of this strategy that has been refuted by [two clear messages](#) from Iran and its allies– is nonetheless coming out unharmed by this rhetorical escalation. Trump seems the only loser, [waiting by the phone](#) that is not expected to ring.

It is Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s belligerence which obliges Iran to take a strong stand; Netanyahu has boasted that his influence led Trump to give him the Syrian Golan Heights, move the US embassy to Jerusalem, give Jerusalem to Netanyahu, and to revoke the JCPOA deal with Iran. He is also very likely behind the 12 conditions Trump seeks to impose on Iran since, unlike the inept US administration, the Israelis know well that Iran cannot accept them. The US president has [sabotaged](#) the peace process and squandered the position of his country as a mediator between the Palestinians and Israel.

When Netanyahu asked Trump to give him all these gifts, the US president did not hesitate to save the Israeli prime minister from criminal prosecution for [fraud and breach of trust](#) to boost his re-election and give him what doesn’t belong to him!

And now it is Iran’s turn to be in the US frying pan. Nevertheless, it seems things haven’t turned out the way Trump [planned](#). His own image has been damaged, but not that of Netanyahu, who has instructed his cabinet to keep silent and stay out of the Iran-US contention. The Israeli Prime Minister can wash his hands of the US non-act of war against Iran and watch in silence, keeping Israel [out of the Iran-US tensions](#) as though he were far from being involved. He is trying to pretend that the ongoing *bras-de-fer* between the US and Iran and Trump’s retreat after the al-Fujairah and Aramco attacks have nothing to do with him.

Netanyahu’s military officers are mistaken to believe “Iran has an [unsettled account](#) with the Israeli Army because it has delivered several hits (in Syria) to which Tehran has not had the chance to retaliate”. Here again, Israel is far from understanding the Iranian mode of action: In February 2018, Iran shot down an F-16 bombing Syria. Iran delivered to Hamas

and the Islamic Jihad the most [efficient](#) Kornet, the anti-tank laser guided missiles and the technology to fire destructive [long-range missiles](#) from Gaza. It is arming Hezbollah with the most sophisticated anti-ship, anti-air, surface-to-surface missiles for possible use against Israel oil platforms and harbours and is spending billions to maintain the strength of its allies: Hezbollah, Iraqi non-state actors, the Syrian government, and the Houthis in Yemen, to name but a few.

But from where does Hezbollah derive its legitimate presence and survival? The answer is simple: from Israel's wars and its violation of Lebanon's sea, territory and airspace. Israel is still occupying the Shebaa farms and Kfarshouba, disputing Lebanon's territorial waters, and it continues to assassinate Hezbollah leaders. Hezbollah would have nothing to do if Israel opted for peace.

In Syria, Moshe Yaalon (former Israel defence minister) says Israel [would rather have ISIS](#) on its borders than Assad and Iran. Trump has given Israel a gift, the Syrian Golan, that belongs to neither country. It has bombed the Syrian Army and its allies that were fighting ISIS and al-Qaeda. Assad was negotiating peace with Israel in exchange for land in 2010, as his father did before him. Netanyahu refuses peace, logically enough since the alternative is to manipulate Trump and collect gifts from him, including all of Jerusalem.

If Israel wanted to end the *raison d'être* of Hezbollah, Hamas, the Islamic Jihad and all the non-state actors around it, it could start by implementing the [Oslo accords](#) as a first step, recognising a state of Palestine, as the Palestinians recognised a state of Israel. A next step would be to return the Lebanese and Syrian territories to their owners (President [Hafez Assad](#) and his son Bashar were both prepared to sign a [peace deal](#) with Israel in exchange for this land) and to refrain from bombing (Israel acknowledges it has [bombed over 200 targets in Syria](#)) and violating its neighbours' sea and airspace (daily violation of Lebanese sovereignty). Then Iran would have no need to build up a necklace of states and non-state allies in the Middle East.

And last but not least, Israel seems to be behind the intelligence misinformation provided to the US, indicating that Iran ["is moving missiles by boat"](#), speeding up the US sending of additional forces to the Middle East. Nevertheless, the US had to find a way out of this seemingly "false flag", because it says now that ["Iran has unloaded missiles from its small boat"](#) to ease the tension.

Iran is unwilling to give Trump an easy escape from the climate of tension he and his team have created. Netanyahu is keeping quiet to avoid criticism from the US, since he is clearly the one who pushed Trump towards confrontation with Iran.

Tehran is aware of the Israeli sabotage and manipulation of the current US administration to its advantage. Trump's lack of knowledge in foreign affairs and his eagerness to be re-elected in 2020 are allowing Netanyahu to pull him around by the nose. The Iranian leader of the revolution never trusted either the US or Europe to keep their commitments to the JCPOA.

"The US will never keep its promises and the EU is an acolytes of the US. You shall get nothing from them" Sayyed Khamenei told president Rouhani when he signed off the JCPOA deal with the Obama administration – according to a high Iranian official – who, after a few years, agreed with his "Rahbar" (the supreme leader of the revolution).

Israel's Mossad provided the US with false intelligence that ballistic missiles were being carried on [wooden boats](#), as though Iran doesn't have enough deserts and places to hide its missiles. Incredibly enough, the Mossad was believed.

This is just one illustration of Israel's power to manipulate the US government into a lose-lose scenario, while Israel can only win-win. The US will lose prestige from backing down, but will lose much more if it is backed into a senseless and catastrophic war. The 12 demands Netanyahu has persuaded the US to make on Iran are [impossible for Iran to comply with](#), as Israel well knows. If Iran were to submit, it would be a victory for Israel. If not, the US will try to go to war or will impose more sanctions—both beneficial to Israel's position. Israel can push the US to a confrontation and push Iran to its limits because Netanyahu has nothing to lose in a situation where the US military assumes the risks of his reckless strategy; Israel has no skin in the game. It is Trump confronting the Iranians not Netanyahu. Israel can sit back, eat popcorn, and watch events unfold. It will consider itself the winner whatever the consequences. Israel's influence over Trump's incompetent administration is the greatest threat to peace today.

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