

Those who Benefit from Failed Iran Talks

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With only a week remaining to the sensitive, determining talks between the top negotiators of six world powers and Iran over the latter's nuclear program, some wicked, corrupt forces from here and there are trying their best to deliver a lethal blow to Tehran and weaken the chances of a successful, productive agreement between the two sides which, during the past years, have interacted with each other in a fluctuating atmosphere of trust and mistrust.

Iran and the members of P5+1 consisting of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council plus Germany held a fresh round of talks in Istanbul earlier on April 14 after a 15-month-long break and agreed upon the preliminary details for further talks to resolve the misunderstandings and come to a comprehensive and thorough conclusion. All sides hailed the talks as constructive and positive and said that there's room for inclusive agreement in spite of some minor differences and disparities.

Subsequently, Iran and the P5+1 held another round of talks hosted by Baghdad on May 23 and May 24 to investigate, in depth, the ways of coming to a mutual understanding and realizing the agenda planned in Istanbul talks. This time, the two parties engaged in more serious and detailed talks and some theoretical differences leaked out; however, they again expressed hopes that the disputes might be settled in a diplomatic and peaceful manner. China and Russia praised the bilateral efforts of the negotiating parties aimed at clearing up the misunderstandings as Iran and P5+1 agreed to hold another set of talks in the Russian capital Moscow on May 18 and 19.

Now, some one week ahead of the decisive talks in Moscow, Iran seems completely resolved and enthusiastic to take part in a full-fledged, serious dialogue with P5+1 and put an end to the artificial, erosive controversy over its nuclear program which has brought with itself several rounds of biting economic sanctions and hard-hitting threats of military strike.

Iranian officials have signaled that they are ready to provide convincing evidence that Tehran's nuclear program is solely designed for peaceful purposes and that contrary to the claims laid by the United States and some of its allies, there's no military dimension in this program. At the same time, high-ranking Iranian officials stated that they are eager to participate in the Moscow talks with goodwill so as to allay the concerns of the other side and demonstrate that they are not after the failure of the negotiations. For example, on June 10 and during a meeting with the former president of the Austrian National Council, Werner Fasslabend, Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi expressed hopes that the Moscow talks will yield satisfactory results if the both parties abide by their obligations and adhere to the policy of mutual trust and respect.

Salehi cleared that Iran has always obeyed international rules and regulations and has brought its nuclear program under the IAEA safeguards and should be entitled to the civilian use of nuclear technology.

However, it seems that there are some individuals or certain groups who benefit from the failure of the nuclear talks and prolongation of standoff over Iran's nuclear program.

As reported by Egypt's Ahram Online, the U.S. ambassador to Israel Dan Shapiro told a Tel Aviv security conference, "We don't intend on continuing talks for talks' sake. The window (for diplomacy) is closing."

AFP, also, quoted an anonymous P5+1 diplomat who expressed his lack of hope for the success of Moscow talks: "I increasingly struggle to see a way where this doesn't end in tears."

The disappointing scene, however, was unfolded when the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Wendy Sherman who represents the U.S. in P5+1 immediately traveled to Israel after the conclusion of Baghdad talks on May 24 to brief the Tel Aviv politicians on the results of talks with Iran. Although the Israeli officials rebuffed the American envoy and refused to meet her and listen to her report on talks with Iran, the very attempt of her visiting Israel just one day after the termination of Baghdad talks was a portentous and ominous gesture which showed that the United States considers as vital the stance of Israel over Tehran's nuclear program.

Another upsetting news was that the U.S. Under Secretary of Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence, David Cohen, who is popularly known in his country as Barack Obama's "sanctions czar" for his unrelenting efforts to convince Iran's trading partners to curb their trade with the country, traveled to Israel on June 5 for negotiations with high-ranking Tel Aviv officials over the upcoming Moscow talks with Iran.

"The sanctions are having an impact on Iran, but I also recognize that more needs to be done. And we are intent on doing more," Cohen told Israel's Army Radio upon arriving in Tel Aviv.

"If we don't get a breakthrough in Moscow there is no question we will continue to ratchet up the pressure," Cohen told Haaretz. "The important point for the Israeli public to understand and for the Iranian leadership to understand is that if we are not able to make progress on the diplomatic track there is additional pressure that can be brought to bear on the pressure track," he added.

Interestingly, Cohen is a member of the U.S. negotiating team in the P5+1.

At the same time, the Israeli media which have been long trumpeting for a much-loved war with Iran, reported with utmost hilarity and happiness that the negotiations between representatives of Iran and the UN atomic watchdog in Vienna which were held parallel to the Iran and P5+1 talks have failed and borne no significant results.

On June 12, the Israeli paper Yediot Ahronot claimed that the talks between Iran and IAEA in Vienna have failed to make any progress and caused "disappointment" for the United States and the "international community."

"Lack of progress in talks between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency is

disappointing and it shows Tehran's continued failure to abide by its commitment to the UN nuclear watchdog," it wrote.

The Israeli paper also quoted Robert Wood, the acting U.S. envoy to IAEA as saying that "yesterday's outcome highlights Iran's continued failure to abide by its commitment to the IAEA, and further underscores the need for it to work with the IAEA to address international community's real concerns."

Such unpremeditated and reckless statements in only one week to the negotiations in Moscow while Iran has expressed its readiness to engage in talks without any preconditions and on equal footings show that there are some groups or people who take advantage of a possible failure in the talks, and Israeli lobby dominating the U.S. Congress and mainstream media is certainly one of them.

Why should the members of the U.S. negotiating team travel to Israel one after another while Israel has nothing to do with Iran's nuclear program and is itself already accused of depositing an arsenal of some 200 nuclear warheads?

Unquestionably, Israel is the first and foremost entity which will be content with a failure in negotiations between Iran and P5+1 in Moscow. They are afraid of the possibility that the nuclear standoff be resolved diplomatically, the sanctions on Iran be lifted and Tehran get the upper hand in talks and find its position in the region and the world fostered and strengthened.

The best policy for P5+1, if they want a progress in the talks, is to dissociate themselves from the Israeli lobby and take into consideration the mutual benefit of Iran and themselves. Of course a diplomatic and peaceful resolution to Iran's nuclear program will be a win-win game while Israel, without any doubts, will be the only loser.

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