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"US/IRAN CLASH"



ANOTHER OIL CRISIS FOR INDIA?



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WAR IS NOT AN OPTION

A war will create waves or rather seas of refugees that will sink the East and the West for which no one can take responsibility. It will be a humanitarian catastrophe greater and worse than that of World War II. Such a situation would create the ideal environment for terrorist organisations to emerge, putting the world in a state of insecurity and catastrophic instability. This can only be a small part of the results of such a step. Both parties and the international community are aware of these concrete results, which place the choice of war off the table this time

On 1 February 1979, millions of Iranian citizens filled the streets to mark the start of the Islamic Revolution. This important event not only affected Iranian geography but was a turning point for the Middle East region as a whole and the establishment of one of the most complex regimes in the world. The West, through the United Kingdom and the United States, led a coup against its own influence in Iran. This was made clear by the first steps of the revolutionary leadership that directly affected Washington when, just days after its victory, 52 US civilians were abducted from the US embassy in Tehran and held hostage. It was with this serious event that the first chapters of US-Iranian relations began in the shadow of the Islamic Revolution in Iran.

Various Middle Eastern observers disagree on the substance of the US-Iranian conflict, what characterises it and how it is analysed. We can say that even their perception of the conflict is different. Looking deeply into the events in the Middle East since the beginning of the present millennium, we can clearly see the existence of relations, coordination and even cooperation between successive US governments and the Iranian regime on many levels. Many political analysts believe that the Iranian regime has been in a state of constant war with Washington since the beginning of the Islamic Revolution and base their views on the slogans that are flowing from side to

side. For example, the slogans of Iran: Death to America and Death to Israel on the one hand, and on the other, the characterisation of the Islamic regime of Iran as the “axis of evil” by all American governments. The reality, in my opinion, is that Tehran and Washington are two countries that are interested in their interests. Whether it’s slogans, in camera, or under the table, it’s just a matter of interest and the media sees only one side and not all.

Export Of Revolution

Today’s Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, during a speech in the 1990s, confirmed that the first lesson he learned from the leader of

Any war declared by Washington will be an invitation for these militias to open fronts against US troops in the region

the Islamic Revolution, Khomeini, is that it should not be confined to the Iranian people alone, but should probably be widespread. This vision was not ink on paper but reflected on the ground through the events and paramilitary groups created, supported and organized by the leadership of the Islamic Revolution, what is now known as the export of the Iranian Revolution. With the cover of Shia religious sect and the pretext of shared history, goals and unity of destiny with neighbouring Shia peoples, the Iranian regime has expanded its influence in the Middle East and beyond. In Iraq, the al-Dawa Party, of Iranian origin, support and funding, has ruled the country for the past 16 years under different names, such as the “State of Law”. In Lebanon, in an earlier speech, Hezbollah militant leader Hassan Nasrallah noted that the plan of his organisation is not only to establish an Islamic State in Lebanon, but to be part of a large Islamic State under the leadership of Iran. His militia has, over the past four decades with

Iran’s military and financial backing, become an important and dangerous military force in the Middle East that threatens the stability of the region as a whole. With the outbreak of the Syrian Revolution in March 2011, Tehran first moved to rescue Assad by providing him with money, weapons, fuel and finally fighters, making Iran’s influence very significant. The creation of the Houthis militia in Yemen was carried out by direct orders from Tehran, giving the Iranian regime strategic depth in southern Saudi Arabia, which terrorised all Gulf countries.

Iran And Trump

The change in the American political scene with Republican dominance and led by Trump made it clear that it would not be a happy time for Iran. Abolishing the nuclear deal was his first step, including imposing moderate economic sanctions that prevented Tehran from exporting oil while allowing eight countries to continue buying (Greece - India -



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Turkey - Pakistan - China - South Korea - South Korea), freezing funds and stopping investment of the Iranian regime in Europe. This step, despite its weakness, had an impact on the Iranian regime and was the beginning



Hezbollah scouts raise their fists and cheer as they listen to a speech of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah, via video link, during a rally in southern Beirut, Lebanon.



Revolutionary Guard Gen. Qassem Soleimani (center).

of greater difficulties. On 22 April 2019, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced the cancellation of the eight-nation exemption, pushing Iran into a dark tunnel.

The current regime in Iran relies on a central leadership, led by Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, who is the religious leader and has the first and last say in any political, military or economic decision taken by the regime. Khamenei has two wings that share roles within his vision and choices: foreign policy led by Foreign Minister Javad Zarif and military led by one of its most senior Iranian Guards and Quds Force commander, Qassem Suleimani. Based on the movements of these two persons, the trends of the regime can be read in their entirety. In a statement by US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on the new package of financial sanctions on the Iranian regime, which annuls the eight countries' exclusion from importing Iranian oil, the first reaction from Khamenei was to send Zarif to New York who has sought to address the

US government calmly, reaffirming Tehran's unwillingness to step up and its readiness to sit at the negotiating table to resolve their differences. Despite his diplomatic dealings with the US, Russia and China, Zarif returned to Iran empty-handed. No one can stand up in front of the US.

On another occasion, Zarif went to Russia to meet with Lavrov, trying to gain any international support and confidence. But things did not turn out as he had hoped. Moscow is calm after the election results in Ukraine and the economic benefits it will derive from the absence of Iranian oil from the world market. In addition, it is consulting with Israel on the Syrian archive. So, Tehran and its critical situation are not important to Moscow. The most significant blow for Iran and its political wing represented by Zarif came from Europe. His contacts with Paris had no effect.

Options For Peace And War

Of course, the military option for Washington against the Iranian regime will not be a picnic or any previous

war such as Iraq or Afghanistan.

Iran, despite its weakness in the air, has an arsenal of small, medium and long-range ballistic missiles capable of hitting anywhere in the Middle East turning it into a sea of fire. We must not forget Iran's tentacles ideologically, militarily and financially linked to the Iranian regime, both in Iraq (Al Hashd Al Shaabi), Syria (Failaq al-Quds) and a number of militant groups created by Tehran during the last eight years), in Lebanon (Hezbollah) or Gaza (Al-Jihad and Hamas) and Yemen (Houthi). Any war declared by Washington will be an invitation for these militias to open fronts against US troops in the region on the one hand and against Washington's regional allies, such as Israel, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and the United States, as well as the US bases in Bahrain, Qatar and Kuwait. On the other hand, the US air force and missile arsenal will make Iranian cities and camps dust and ashes, while their allies inside and outside the region will be part of that conflict. Are the sides prepared for the outcome of such a war?

In the field of energy, it can be confirmed that around 20 million barrels of oil are exported daily from the Gulf States, and therefore, any war would mean stopping these exports. As a result, the price of the barrel will reach unbearably high, as Europe will lose almost 35 per cent of its oil imports and 40 per cent of its gas imports. The war will create waves or rather seas of refugees that will sink the East and the West for which no one can take responsibility. It will be a humanitarian catastrophe greater and worse than that of World War II. Such a situation would create the ideal environment for terrorist organisations to emerge, putting the world in a state of insecurity and catastrophic instability. This can only be a small part of the results of such a step. Both parties and the international community are aware of these concrete results, which place the choice of war off the table this time.

Peace And Diplomacy

There is no doubt that Iranian diplomacy has evolved dramatically, especially with the arrival of Javad Zarif as foreign minister. Zarif, through his political ability, has been an important factor in reaching an agreement on Iran's nuclear programme with the West and Washington, despite internal pressure mainly from conservatives close to Khamenei. Also, we cannot overlook the role played by the Iranian lobby in Washington, which has worked and is still working to form alliances within the Democratic Party of the United States aimed at rapidly preventing the deterioration of the situation. For the time being, Zarif operates under the visionary arrangements of Khamenei. His moves in Europe, Russia and China, despite the rejection of US positions by these countries, on the ground are unable to

change the landscape. Summarising Zarif's diplomatic line, there are only two tracks, no third. The first is to agree to negotiate with Washington's representatives in a neutral country and to try to reach a middle ground without increasing sanctions. The second option is to agree to make significant concessions to the Iranian ballistic and nuclear programme and then to negotiate directly with the US through which it will reduce sanctions and enter into prolonged negotiations. Attempts to make Tehran profit from Europe, Russia and China, or smuggling, or waiting for these countries to bypass America, are not feasible. The black market or militaristic economy is not enough for a country like Iran with a population of nearly 81 million and huge financial needs that cannot be met by such methods.


Node point

Many observers and analysts portray the US-Iran conflict as ideological and some regard it as a conflict of interest. Another part believes that the conflict is related to Iran's hostility to Israel. But in reality, US-Iranian relations are like any relationship between two countries. At some points they agree and at some points they disagree. At the present time, the two governments agree on the Iraq and Yemen files, while differing on two main points: The first is the nuclear programme and its effects on Iran's ballistic programme, and the second is solely the Iranian presence in Syria (and this is Israel's demand). As a result, any Iranian concession beyond these files will not affect sanctions and trying to rescue the previous nuclear deal becomes impossible without adding any substantial changes to them.

Therefore, it is possible to say that if Tehran wants to solve the problem

it should take the following steps – it should open the doors of its nuclear reactors, public and secret, to US and international observers periodically and continuously. In addition, it should reduce uranium enrichment well below the previously accepted rate (3.67). Washington may also demand the destruction of military facilities associated with Iran's ballistic programme, and it will not have mid-range and long-range missiles, but only 300 km range like Scud type missiles. Concerning the Syrian dossier, Iran should, of course, withdraw the last soldier from Syrian territory. The Israeli government has recently called for an end to the presence of all Syrian militias, including those of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, not only from Syria but also outside.

“Biting fingers”

In conclusion, no one can definitively deny that the situation between Tehran and Washington is slipping into open war. But I can assure you that this possibility is very weak. At this point, Trump, who is preparing for the next presidential election that will not be easy on the basis of recent polls, will be very cautious in any military action. The best option for the US is sanctions and waiting, Tehran, on the other hand, is well aware that waiting until the US election, hoping that Trump will lose, will not be economically advantageous. Every day that passes with sanctions means the loss of billions that are absolutely essential to Iran. Therefore, it is more likely that Tehran would step up its efforts to push Trump into a limited military step that would reduce his chances of electoral success or step up its provocative actions in the Strait of Hormuz waiting for the Americans to take a step against it, or he will wait to lose patience and accept to sit at the table easing of sanctions. In short, we conclude that this is a “biting fingers” battle in the Arabic sense. The one who hurts first will be the one who retreats, and the other side will be the winner. 

The **best option** for the **US** is **sanctions and waiting**