

Iran: From a Model of Multilateral Diplomacy to Another Failure of the International Order

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From a UN-endorsed Deal to an Illegal War

- The Iran nuclear negotiations between 2013 and 2015 were in many ways a model for multilateral conflict resolution, with the United Nations playing a key role.
- President Trump destroyed this carefully crafted agreement and gradually re-normalized the isolation and punishment of Iran.
- The end result was in many ways the antithesis of international law: an illegal war launched without Congressional or UN authorization by two nuclear-armed powers against a non-nuclear state.
- This is a consequential week that may determine whether there is more war or a new deal.

Obama-era diplomacy succeeds

- U.S. Intelligence asserts Iran discontinued a nuclear weapons program in 2003, before later pursuing a hedging strategy. Iran has cited its NPT rights to use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.
- Obama spurned pressure to bomb Iran.
- Multilateral negotiations led to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action in 2015, endorsed by UN Security Council Resolution 2231.
- Core disputes between the U.S. and Iran were resolved without a single shot fired: war was averted, as was the risk of a nuclear-armed Iran.



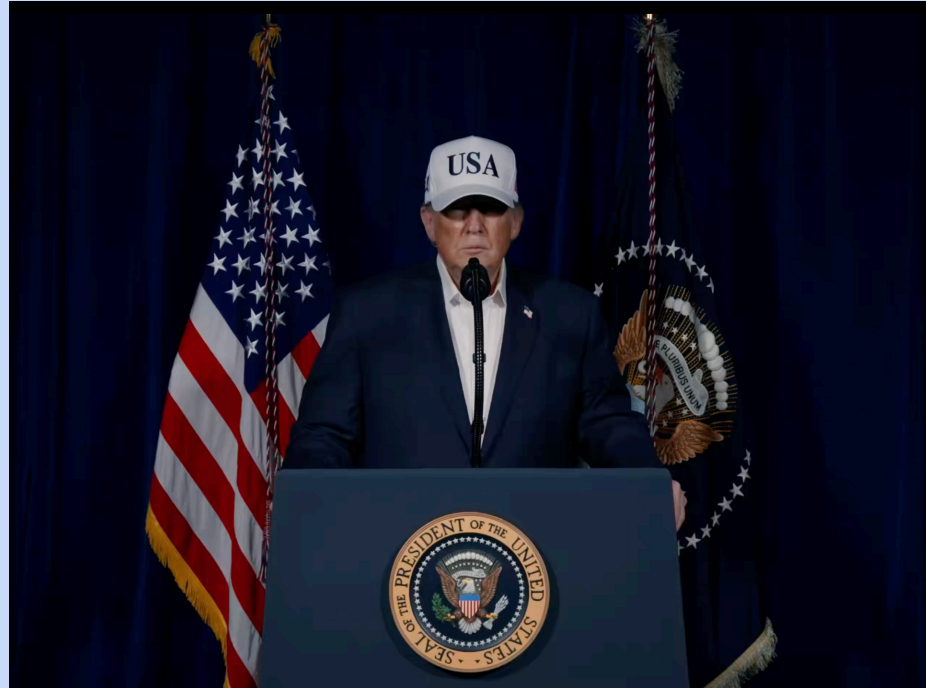
Trump Ends the Deal, Returns to Sanctions



- Trump abides by the JCPOA for 16 months, snapping back sanctions in violation of UNSCR 2231.
- “Maximum pressure” in 2019 ends Iranian compliance with the deal.
- Sanctions: collective punishment that harms the Iranian people.
- Biden balks at returning to the JCPOA, as he promised to do.

Trump chooses illegal war

- Wars on Iran launched without UN, Congressional approval, in violation of UN Charter.
- Attack by 2 nuclear-armed states against a non-nuclear state that had been negotiating, was not pursuing a nuclear weapon.



Civilians Pay the Biggest Price in Iran War



The Pasteur Institute of Iran, one of the nation's leading medical facilities, was bombed on April 2, 2026.

After bragging about throwing out rules of engagement, tens of thousands of bombs dropped on Iran destroy:

- Residential buildings
- Oil and gas infrastructure, spreading toxic smoke.
- Hundreds of schools
- Hospitals and medical facilities
- Desalination plants
- Power plants
- Bridges

Minab school strike underscores civilian death

- On February 28, Shajareh Tayyebah Primary School in Minab, Iran, was struck by U.S. tomahawk missiles. **The final death toll from the attack on Shajareh Tayyebah School is 156.** 120 students - 73 boys and 47 girls - were killed, the majority between the ages of 7 and 12.
- The Minab strike was the largest civilian death toll of any single U.S. attack since 1991.
- **More than 1,700 civilians, including 254 children, killed in the war.**



Rescue workers search for survivors in Minab

Threat of Civilizational Destruction



Donald J. Trump  
@realDonaldTrump

A whole civilization will die tonight, never to be brought back again. I don't want that to happen, but it probably will. However, now that we have Complete and Total Regime Change, where different, smarter, and less radicalized minds prevail, maybe something revolutionarily wonderful can happen, WHO KNOWS? We will find out tonight, one of the most important moments in the long and complex history of the World. 47 years of extortion, corruption, and death, will finally end. God Bless the Great People of Iran!

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- President Trump has also repeatedly threatened to escalate the bombing of Iran's civilian infrastructure, including attacks to target every power plant and bridge in Iran.
- President Trump went even further with an explicitly genocidal threat against Iran, stating "A whole civilization will die tonight, never to return," if Iran did not accept his terms for a deal.
- Genocide is among the most grievous international crimes, and is firmly banned via the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, which the U.S. ratified.

Nothing Gained from War

- The U.S. has tried an illegal, disastrous war on Iran and failed to improve the U.S. position while dealing a grievous blow to the international order.
- This is a real tragedy, as the U.S. had a deal to ensure Iran could not weaponize its nuclear program, in return for sanctions relief that benefited ordinary Iranians.
- The answer is not to double down on further violations of international law, but to pursue a policy grounded in it.
- The JCPOA negotiations from more than a decade ago, while derided by President Trump, continue to serve as a model for how to address conflicts with Iran.

