

Iran (August 23, 2020)

=====

1a)

What's next after the UAE-Israel deal?

By Gawdat Bahgat

August 20, 2020

<https://responsiblestatecraft.org/2020/08/20/whats-next-after-the-uae-israel-deal/>

„[...] The well-documented truth is that the two sides have been closely working together for decades and for electoral reasons in Israel and the United States and concerns about regime survival, Prime Minister Netanyahu, President Trump and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed (MBZ) decided to give a public face to their deep and growing cooperation. Each of the three leaders has his own reasons to formalize the Tel Aviv-Abu Dhabi agreement. [...] A better approach to promote peace and stability is for all regional powers, in cooperation with international ones, to engage in security dialogue and recognize the legitimate concerns of each other and create a mechanism to facilitate a peaceful diplomatic settlement to the regional conflicts based on mutual respect. Finally, for many years the rulers of the UAE (and other Arab countries) have been buying Israeli spyware to collect data on dissidents inside and outside their countries. Such practices are not likely to contribute to regime survival and national security. Rather, implementing broad and genuine political reform based on transparency and good governance is certain to improve the legitimacy of governments and consolidate domestic political stability.“

1b)

How Trump's arms deals risk more conflict in the Gulf

August 21, 2020

By Mitchell Plitnick

<https://responsiblestatecraft.org/2020/08/21/how-trumps-arms-deals-risk-more-conflict-in-the-gulf/>

„[...] On Monday, a report emerged that Netanyahu had agreed to an American sale of F-35 fighter jets and other highly advanced weapons to the UAE as part of the agreement. Despite the prime minister's vehement denials, the reporter who broke the story — Yedioth Ahronoth's Nahum Barnea, one of the most respected journalists in Israel — stood by his reporting. Although all parties claim the sale of the weapons is not a condition of the UAE-Israel agreement, subsequent statements support Barnea's scoop. For example, the New York Times reported that American officials "do not dispute that the new momentum on the arms sale — after years of stalled requests by the Emirates to buy the fighter jet — is linked to the broader diplomatic initiative." [...]“

1c)

Iran Says Holding UAE Boat After Fishermen Deaths

By Bourse & Bazaar

August 20, 2020

<https://www.bourseandbazaar.com/news-1/2020/8/20/iran-says-holding-uae-boat-after-fishermen-deaths>

„Tehran said Thursday it seized an Emirati boat following a Persian Gulf incident in which two Iranian fishermen died, stoking tensions after the UAE said it would establish ties with Israel. The Iranian foreign ministry said it also summoned the UAE charge d'affaires to protest the maritime incident, which took place on Monday. UAE coastguard vessels had "opened fire on several Iranian fishing boats... leading to the deaths of two fishermen", a statement by the ministry said. [...]“

=====

2a)

Iran: The U.S. Brings Maximum Pressure to the UN

The Trump administration continues its “maximum pressure” campaign against Iran, now with an attempt to restore pre-2015 UN sanctions, a right reserved for signatories to the nuclear deal it abandoned. Other UN Security Council members should disregard this gambit and urge Tehran not to overreact.

By The International Crisis Group

August 19, 2020

<https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/gulf-and-arabian-peninsula/iran/218-iran-us-brings-maximum-pressure-un>

https://d2071andvip0wj.cloudfront.net/218-iran-us-brings-maximum-pressure-to%20-the-un_1.pdf

„Conclusions: Washington’s “maximum pressure” campaign has now been supplemented with a minimal diplomatic one – a futile effort to extend the UN’s arms restrictions followed by a disingenuous effort to reimpose all UN sanctions. Because the snapback procedures set out in the JCPOA and Resolution 2231 are airtight, the strictly legal outcome of a Security Council tug of war will be in doubt. But its political consequences ought not to be. By making clear their view that the U.S. lacks standing to trigger snapback, shrugging off its actions as meaningless and actively thwarting any step at the UN to revive the sanctions mechanisms, the rest of the Council – and in particular the P4 – can help sustain what is left of the nuclear deal. Iran, too, should avoid playing into U.S. hands by taking the Trump administration’s actions more seriously than they warrant. The Trump administration has made no secret of its ultimate goal, which is to bury the JCPOA once and for all. At this stage, there is one smart way to respond to its political antics: ignore them.“

2b)

Factsheet on the illegitimate and felonious U.S. attempt to re-impose U.N. sanctions on Iran

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Islamic Republic of Iran

August 21, 2020

<https://en.mfa.ir/portal/NewsView/607425>

<https://en.mfa.ir/files/mfaen/f.pdf>

„The Dispute Resolution Mechanism is only open to the actual JCPOA Participants - and not to a defected “original” participant that willfully and explicitly decided to “cease participation”, actively sought to destroy the instrument and subsequently - and self-admittedly - relinquished all its prerogatives and privileges.“

2c)

Iranian MPs Table Motion on JCPOA Exit If Snapback Triggered

By Tasnim News

August, 22, 2020 - 13:54

<https://www.tasnimnews.com/en/news/2020/08/22/2332896/iranian-mps-table-motion-on-jcpoa-exit-if-snapback-triggered>

„A group of Iranian lawmakers put forward a motion for an automatic withdrawal from the 2015 nuclear deal in case the activation of snapback mechanism in the JCPOA would re-impose the UN sanctions on Tehran.“

2d)

China says US push for Iran sanctions ‘self-serving political manipulation’

By Press TV

August 21, 2020

<https://www.presstv.com/Detail/2020/08/21/632296/China-snapback-Iran>

„China says the United States’ call for the re-imposition of the United Nations sanctions on Iran is ‘nothing but a self-serving political manipulation,’ stressing once again that Washington has no right to make such a demand after its unilateral withdrawal from the nuclear deal of 2015.“

2e)

Instead of Isolating Iran, U.S. Finds Itself on the Outside Over Nuclear Deal

Allies and adversaries alike have refused to recognize the Trump administration’s demand for sanctions, potentially weakening American authority worldwide.

By Lara Jakes and David E. Sanger

August 20, 2020

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/20/us/politics/trump-iran-nuclear-deal.html?searchResultPosition=1>

„A diplomatic standoff over restoring international sanctions against Iran may be the most vivid example yet of how the United States has largely isolated itself from the world order—instead of isolating Tehran, as the Trump administration intended. At nearly every step President Trump has taken in his dogged pursuit to demolish a 2015 accord limiting Iran’s nuclear program, he has run into opposition, including from America’s strongest allies in Europe.“

2f)

Russia: U.S. claims to trigger snapback go against ‘elementary common sense’

By Tehran Times

August 22, 2020

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/451564/Russia-U-S-claims-to-trigger-snapback-go-against-elementary>

„Russia’s permanent representative to the Vienna-based international organizations said on Saturday that the United States’ move to trigger snapback mechanism and return the UN sanctions on Iran go against

“elementary common sense” as the U.S. is no longer a party to the JCPOA, the official name for the 2015 nuclear agreement.“

2g)

Trump takes Europe hostage on Iran

U.S. push for sanctions on Tehran has left Europe in an awkward position.

By Matthew Karnitschnig

August 20, 2020

<https://www.politico.com/news/2020/08/20/trump-iran-sanctions-europe-399136>

„For years, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, French President Emmanuel Macron and other EU leaders have beseeched Trump to drop his America First, bull-in-a-china-shop approach to diplomacy, in favor of consensus-building through the United Nations and other international organizations. They may soon wish they hadn’t. U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo confirmed he will travel to U.N. headquarters in New York on Thursday to formally trigger the so-called snapback provision that would force the Security Council to reactivate sanctions imposed against Iran in the years before a 2015 agreement to try and force Tehran to curtail its nuclear weapons program. [...]“

=====

3)

How China could shape Iran's economic future

By Shahriar Sabet

19 August 2020

Tehran's proposed 25-year accord with Beijing highlights an emerging consensus that it is time for Iran to look East

<https://www.middleeasteye.net/opinion/iran-economy-china-shape-future>

„[...] Despite the initial uproar against the China accord from a rather pro-western elite and population, a consensus seems to be emerging in Tehran, politically as well as within a frustrated private sector, that it is time to go East. [...]“

=====

4)

IRGC Academic Journals Acknowledge Protests Often Driven by Regime Missteps

By Ali Alfoneh

The Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington

August 18, 2020

<https://agsiw.org/irgc-academic-journals-acknowledge-protests-often-driven-by-regime-missteps/>

„Authors of articles published by Imam Hussein University of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps see the real challenges the regime is facing from the unprivileged slumdwellers and the politicized middle class and its grievances.“

=====

5)

Chabahar-Gwadar ports' connection to strengthen Iran-Pakistan ties: Speakers

By IRNA

August 22, 2020

<https://en.irna.ir/news/83917864/Chabahar-Gwadar-ports-connection-to-strengthen-Iran-Pakistan>

„A group of diplomats and foreign relations experts from the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan, stressing the use of capacities of regional economic organizations to strengthen bilateral and multilateral relations said cooperation between Iran's Chabahar and Pakistan's Gwadar ports would enhance ties between the two states.“

=====

6)

The Iranian Jews Who Joined the Islamic Revolution

Thousands flocked from Tehran's synagogues to protests, led by their rabbis. Jewish delegates met with Khomeini to express support for his struggle. A groundbreaking study sheds light on the life of Iranian Jews, their complex view of Zionism and their surprising stance on the Islamic Revolution

By Ofer Aderet

August 22, 2020

<https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium.MAGAZINE-the-iranian-jews-who-joined-the-islamic-revolution-1.9088876?v=1598178197732C>

„[...] Sternfeld offers a number of illuminating examples to prove that history is not black or white and that there is a disparity between the widespread, often simplistic, narrative and the complex reality. [...] “It's not a simple matter to be a Jew in Iran, and it would be naive to say otherwise, but it's not simple to be an Iranian these days at all. There is some sort of assumption that if we portray complexity, we are acting as defense counsel for the Iranian regime and dismissing the suffering it is causing. My view is that when we present a complex picture, the criticism is far more focused and accurate. It is impossible to claim, as no few charlatans do, that Iran treats Jews the way Germany did in the 1930s, and as such presents an existential threat to Iran's Jews and to Israel. There is plenty to be critical of in regard to the Iranian regime: about its attitude toward minorities, toward groups for political, religious or gender reasons. I don't wish to dictate a different narrative, but to request a broad range of analyses and approaches to Jewish life and history in Iran.”“

=====

7)

Grassroots Working Group Protects Iran's Most Vulnerable People

Collective action by motivated volunteers and health professionals provides a glimmer of hope in one of the countries most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

By Jasper Hamann

August 20, 2020

<https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2020/08/316086/grassroots-working-group-protects-irans-most-vulnerable-people/>

„An inspirational grassroots initiative called the “Working Group” has helped protect one the world’s most vulnerable communities from COVID-19 amid economic catastrophe and sanctions. As Iran simultaneously faced the pandemic, sanctions, and restrictions to humanitarian imports, its large community of people who use illegal drugs faced a looming disaster. [...]“

=====

8)

Missile Farms

August 09, 2020

<https://irangeomil.blogspot.com/2020/08/missile-farms.html>

„While Western Media was busy mocking Iran's 'fake aircraft carrier', the aftermath of the July exercise revealed something much more intriguing - a novel launch technique that IRGC-ASF Commander Amir Ali Hajizadeh aptly dubbed 'Missile Farms' [...] Iran's new missile farms are an interesting approach to countering threats that may try to erode Iran's deterrent. By eliminating the need for TELs to move into position, missile farms prevent surprise attacks from being detected prior to launch. They also substantially reduce reaction times and costs of SRBMs. These improvements make Iran's regional deterrent more robust, timely, and less vulnerable to attrition.“