

Protect the Iran Agreement, Prevent a War

The Fruits of Diplomacy

The Iran Nuclear Agreement, also known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), is a great diplomatic achievement. Thanks to painstaking diplomacy, the world can rest assured that Iran is not currently pursuing nuclear weapons. If at any point Iran decided to start down that path, because of the agreement, the world would know about it with more than enough time to respond.



The accomplishments and benefits of the JCPOA include:

- Verifiably moving Iran's breakout time – the amount of time it would take for Iran to produce enough fissile material for one bomb – from 2-3 months to more than one year.
 - Iran has shipped out 98 percent of its enriched uranium.
 - Iran has decommissioned roughly two-thirds of its centrifuges.
 - Iran has filled the core of the heavy water reactor at its Arak facility with concrete so it cannot be used to produce plutonium.
 - Iran has agreed to the most extensive and technologically advanced inspections regime in history.
- Preventing a war with Iran by serving as the only viable alternative to ensuring Iran does not obtain nuclear weapons.
- Strengthening moderates in Iran, as demonstrated by the success of moderate politicians in Iran's parliamentary elections last year.
- Opening new opportunities for American companies to do business in Iran.

If the Iran Agreement Collapses, War with Iran Becomes Much More Likely

Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis has repeatedly called the biggest threats to our national security "Iran, Iran, and Iran." C.I.A. Director Mike Pompeo has advocated that the U.S. pursue regime change in Iran. Even President Obama, who worked tirelessly to pursue a diplomatic means of blocking Iran's potential paths to acquiring nuclear weapons, refused to rule out using military force against Iran should it walk away from the agreement. Should the agreement fall apart, regardless of where the blame for its failure is placed, longtime advocates of war with Iran in Congress and the administration would see their arguments elevated.



New Sanctions Risk Unraveling the Agreement – Some Say That’s the Point

- Some of the new sanctions bills Congress is considering are overly broad and would likely be perceived by Iran as a de facto violation of the agreement. They could give Iran a pretext to abandon any or all of its commitments under the agreement, which could lead to the complete collapse of the agreement and put war with Iran back on the table.
- During the negotiation of the agreement, Sen. Tom Cotton (R-AK) said of one of the Iran sanctions bills at the time that “the end of these negotiations isn’t an unintended consequence of congressional action. It is very much an intended consequence – a feature, not a bug.”
- Michael Rubin of the American Enterprise Institute, an influential conservative think tank, was quoted in the Washington Post shortly before Trump took office as saying, “What’d I’d like to see is them [the Trump administration] going along with the deal, but subtly antagonizing the Iranians enough so the Iranians want to scrap it... More non-nuclear sanctions. Pushing the IAEA to inspect more. We can force them to be the ones to pull the trigger.”
- The whole idea of this shameless strategy is to create a situation in which the administration can argue that Iran is to blame for the agreement’s collapse, effectively creating a pretext, albeit a misleading and illegitimate pretext, for war with Iran.

War with Iran Would Be Catastrophic on Many Levels

The Trump administration has been needlessly ratcheting up tensions between the U.S. and Iran, and has refused to rule out a military response should Iran continue to its ballistic missile tests, regardless of whether it stands by the nuclear agreement. Here’s why that would be a disastrous approach:

- Bombing Iran would empower hardliners who have long argued that Iran needs nuclear weapons to deter attacks against it, and would all but ensure that Iran wholeheartedly pursues nuclear weapons.
- Bombing Iran’s nuclear facilities would at most set Iran’s nuclear program back a few years. Iran would likely build new nuclear facilities in secret and deeper underground, which would almost certainly lead to further escalation.
- Going to war with Iran would not only cost an exorbitant amount of taxpayer dollars, it would also risk American lives, build support for anti-American hardline politicians in Iran, and bolster recruitment efforts for extremist groups across the Middle East.



Get Involved

- **Contact your Senators and your Representative** and let them know your thoughts on this issue
 - Call the Capitol switchboard at 202-224-3121 to get connected with their offices.
 - Lookup your members of Congress online to find out how to contact them by email.
- **Write and submit letters to the editor** in response to articles on this topic
 - Find an article that you want to correct, critique, add to, or reinforce and try to keep your letter short and to the point.
 - Check the paper’s guidelines for submitting letters to the editor, and follow them.
- **Attend congressional town halls, rallies, protests**, and any gathering designed to raise public awareness and scrutiny of the issue.

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8630 Fenton Street, Suite 524, Silver Spring, MD 20910 | Ph. 301.565.4050 | www.PeaceAction.org