

Barack H. Obama's Legacy, Part 8
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President Donald Trump recently confirmed that Iran was in compliance with the so-called "Iran Deal", signed by President Obama on 14 Jul 2015. The "Iran Deal" is officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and is in fact a blueprint for Iran to do whatever it wants. It was an agreement reached between Iran and a mix of interested nations: the U. S., U. K., France, Germany, the European Union, China, and Russia.

The terms of the agreement were:

- a. Iran's stockpile of enriched uranium is to be reduced from 10000 kg to 300 kg, with a maximum enrichment limited to 3.67%, and held at that level for 15 years.
- b. Iran's only enrichment facility is to be located at Natanz; the number of centrifuges there is limited to 5000.
- c. The enrichment facility at Fordow is to be converted into a nuclear research facility.
- d. The number of centrifuges at Fordow is reduced to 1000; the remaining 13000 are to be used only as spares.
- e. Iran can conduct research and development of centrifuges by a separate agreement.
- f. The heavy water facility at Arak is to be converted such that no weapons-grade plutonium is produced as a by-product.
- g. Iran is prohibited from reprocessing spent nuclear fuel; it is to be exported (presumably to Russia).
- h. Iran agreed to monitoring by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).
- i. The U. S. is to release \$ 100 B in assets frozen after the 1979 Revolution.
- j. The U. S. and European Union are to lift most embargoes and economic sanctions on Iran.

The U. S. immediately released the assets and lifted the embargo. But there are a few peculiarities about this agreement. First, Barack Obama appears to be the only one who signed it; Iran's president Hassan Rouhani did not sign it, nor was it ratified by either Iran's Parliament or the U. S. Senate. Iran has no legal obligations under the agreement. Secondly, Iran has a veto on what personnel can visit which Iranian sites, and even if allowed, can delay it for 24 days. No Americans are allowed in the IAEA delegations. Third, Iran immediately disputed the interpretations (22 Jul 2015), claiming that there were no limitations on weapons, and Iran retained the right to import and export weapons as it saw fit. It has continued to trade in weapons. On Oct 2016, Iran's Atomic Energy Agency leader Ali Akbar Salehi claimed that Iran's nuclear program is intact. Fourth, there is no viable means of monitoring whether or not Iran is complying, so, in the absence of contrary proof, President Trump probably had no choice but to re-certify it.

Meanwhile, trade between Iran and Germany, China, France and Russia has greatly expanded, including military aircraft, nuclear reactors, and anti-aircraft weapons. Also, Iran continues to fund terrorist groups throughout the Middle East in its quest to dominate the region, including support for the Houthi rebels in Yemen, as well as their traditional proxies in Palestine (Hezbollah and Hamas).

Once again, we see the triumph of politics over reality as practiced by Mr. Obama. He got a political paper with nice-sounding words which in the end will promote and confirm Iran's capacity to produce the nuclear arsenal it needs to threaten Israel and Saudi Arabia.