

TWO YEARS LATER: THE REAL STORY ON THE IRAN DEAL



Friday marked the second anniversary of the announcement of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the landmark nuclear agreement reached between a U.S.-led group of six world powers and Iran. On this anniversary, we ask: was the deal a success?

The answer is a resounding “no”. Iran is using the agreement as a domestic tool of oppression and as an instrument of terror abroad. Over the past two years, the Islamic Republic has repeatedly tested the limits of the deal and has also pursued a much more aggressive military campaign across the Middle East, confirming the worst fears of the JCPOA’s critics.

Does the deal prevent Iran from developing a nuclear weapon—the stated goal of the negotiations?

NO 

- To the contrary, the agreement provides Iran with a [patient pathway](#) to a nuclear weapon over the next decade.
- The country’s core nuclear infrastructure remains [intact](#); none of Iran’s nuclear facilities have been closed; and the Islamic Republic is permitted to keep more centrifuges under the JCPOA than it possessed when Obama entered office.
- In fifteen years, Iran will emerge as a [threshold nuclear power](#), meaning it can build an unlimited number of advanced centrifuge powered enrichment facilities and heavy water nuclear reactors that will almost instantly usher them into the nuclear club.
- In fifteen years, Iran will also be permitted to enrich uranium at its underground facility at Fordow—a facility [likely impenetrable](#) to U.S. military strikes.

Is Iran complying with the agreement?

NO 

- Iran has violated the deal multiple times. The Islamic Republic has not been caught with enough enriched uranium to build a nuclear weapon, but has already exceeded the 130-tonne limit on its heavy water stock [twice](#) and the [annual report](#) of Germany’s domestic intelligence agency revealed that Iran continues to seek illicit missile technology, which experts fear can be used for the delivery of nuclear weapons.
- A close examination of the JCPOA [reveals](#) that the terms of the agreement permit Iran to hold international inspectors at bay for a period of three months or longer before undeclared nuclear sites can be inspected.
- Iran is also allowed to use its own inspectors to investigate the Parchin military complex, as part of a [secret agreement](#) signed with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which essentially makes Iranian compliance a matter of trust.

Does the deal empower the moderates in Iran?

NO 

- The Obama administration claimed that the agreement would empower the moderates in Iran and reign in the country’s domestic human rights abuses. Unfortunately, the deal has strengthened hardline elements, most notably the notorious Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) with powers that reaches into nearly [every sector](#) of the Iranian economy, making the IRGC a major beneficiary of the agreement and the sanctions relief entailed.
- Anti-Americanism and the intention to wipe Israel off the map are not mere rhetoric, but remain part of the regime’s core DNA. Persecution, violence, and outright murder have also gotten [worse](#) under Rouhani’s tenure, with at least 966 people being put to death in the country in 2015—the highest number since 1989, twice as many as in 2010, and 10 times as many as in 2005.

Does the deal restrict Iran’s hegemonic ambitions and terror sponsoring?

NO 



- Iran has [gobbled up](#) four Arab capitals through its influence: Beirut, Damascus, Baghdad and most recently Sana’a.
- Iran is [directly complicit](#) in the industrial-scale killing in Syria, where it supports Assad’s murderous regime with the support of Hezbollah, has tightened its grip on Iraq through affiliated Shiite militia groups, and has [used](#) the Houthi rebels in Yemen as a vehicle to consolidate power on the Arabian Peninsula.
- Obama’s own [State Department listed Iran](#) as the leading state sponsor of terror, while the nuclear deal negotiated by his administration provided the Islamic Republic with hundreds of millions of dollars in sanctions relief and new trade deals.
- Iran’s terror proxies are among the main beneficiaries and the intelligence chief of the Israel Defense Forces [confirmed](#) that Iran now contributes \$50 million to Hamas’ annual budget, while bankrolling its Shi’ite Lebanese proxy Hezbollah with \$75 million and funding Palestinian Islamic Jihad with an additional \$70 million.

What is the long-term prospect of the deal?

The agreement will likely collapse under its own weight.



- The deal’s many [loopholes](#) and the lack of political will to hold Iran to the terms of the JCPOA mean that the agreement does not prevent Iran from building a nuclear weapon, but rather invites and encourages the Islamic Republic to cheat, deceit and develop a [covert weapons program](#).
- Even if Iran plays by the rules, the [fatal flaw](#) of the deal means that the outcome will be the same. Tehran will emerge as a nuclear threshold state with an industrial-size enrichment program and almost no breakout time in a decade from now, as well as with [hundreds of billions of dollars](#) from sanctions relief and international trade deals that will make it immune to future economic sanctions and allow the regime to pursue its hegemonic ambitions unabated arm in arm with terrorist organizations and rogue regimes that threaten the security of Israel, the United States and its allies.