

Iran WINS First Big Victory. Ceasefire Declared. | Dr. Pascal Lottaz

Iran managed to coerce the US into accepting its 10-point plan as a basis for negotiations. Here is what we can infer from this. Substack article with full text: <https://pascallottaz.substack.com/p/iran-declares-interim-victory> Support us here: Donations & Shop: <https://neutralitystudies-shop.fourthwall.com>

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Iran and the United States have both declared that they agreed to an interim ceasefire. What I'm referring to is this headline here—I just posted it on my Substack. I call it an “interim ceasefire victory for Iran,” because that’s what Iran says it has achieved. On the other hand, we now have confirmation from the United States that they, too, actually agree to a ceasefire. That’s part of this news here: the U.S. and Iran have agreed to a ceasefire recently. And what’s coming from Donald Trump is the following—Trump said he agreed to a ceasefire on the condition that Iran agreed to reopen the Strait of Hormuz.

Iran had put forward a 10-point proposal, which Trump views as a workable basis for negotiation. Apparently, this is a quote from Donald Trump. What we have now is both sides basically saying, “Okay, fine, we agree to a ceasefire.” But before everybody gets their hopes up too high, there are very legitimate concerns that this could be another U.S. trick—a ploy against Iran. Most importantly, Brian Berletic just put up a video arguing that the ceasefire is just another trap for Iran. And naturally, any sane observer at the moment has to fear that within 24 hours the U.S. could be bombing again—yet another insane turn of events.

I also have to say that this kind of ceasefire agreement comes less than 12 hours after the most unhinged comment I’ve ever read from a U.S. president—sitting or not. I just want to read this to you. Last afternoon in the United States, but last night here in Asia, Donald Trump tweeted this out: “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 revolutionary and wonderful can happen.”

Who knows? I mean, the fact that he threatens the entire civilization of Iran with annihilation can only be read as a threat to use nuclear weapons against Iran. And, as a matter of fact, that’s how it was understood in large parts of the U.S. political establishment. We had Marjorie Taylor Greene, who tweeted that this genocidal threat must be met with the 25th Amendment—meaning the removal of a president who’s no longer fit for office. Ro Khanna tweeted the same. There were tons

of people saying this is a 25th Amendment–type situation, and they were absolutely enraged, because this level of threat has just never been put out by a U.S. president.

Now, 12 hours later, the U.S. president says there's some form of agreement. What I want to emphasize, though, is not so much what the United States is saying—because again, the U.S. says one thing today and, six hours from now, something completely different. But I'd like to outline what Iran is actually saying about what this deal means. Luckily, I have a close Iranian friend who sent me the statement from the Supreme National Security Council—what they put out inside Iran. They made a statement that they published on a site called Tasnim News.

So, this one here is from Tasnim News. It's the statement they put out in Farsi. I used ChatGPT to translate it and posted it on my Substack. I'd like to read out the key passages—it's kind of long, but still, I want to go through them so you can understand where this seems to be going. It's a bit much, but please bear with me; it's worth understanding. "The enemy, in its unfair, unlawful, and criminal war against the Iranian nation, has suffered an undeniable, historic, and crushing defeat."

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I'll skip a couple of parts here and go straight to the key passages. Iran has achieved a great victory and forced "criminal America" to accept a ten-point plan. In this plan, America has, in principle, committed itself to guaranteeing non-aggression; the continuation of Iran's control over the Strait of Hormuz; acceptance of enrichment; the lifting of all primary and secondary sanctions; the termination of all Security Council and Board of Governors resolutions; the payment of compensation to Iran; the withdrawal of U.S. combat forces from the region; and the cessation of war on all fronts, including against the heroic Islamic resistance in Lebanon.

The brave fighters of Islam and their courageous allies in the Axis of Resistance "resolved to teach these enemies a historic lesson once and for all, deciding to create conditions in which the enemy would forever abandon any thought of aggression against beloved Iran and would fully taste humiliation and disgrace before the great nation of Iran." With this strategy, and relying on the unprecedented political and social unity that had been created in the country, Iran and the resistance began one of the heaviest combined battles in history against America and the Zionist regime. They constricted the enemy on all fronts so severely that not only did none of the enemy's principal objectives materialize, but the enemy realized about ten days after the start of the war that it had no possibility of victory.

For this reason, through various channels and methods, it began efforts to contact Iran and request a ceasefire. The noble people of Iran should know that, thanks to the struggles of their sons and their own historic presence in the field, the enemy has been begging for more than a month for Iran and the resistance to stop their intense fire. But the country's officials rejected all such requests because, from the very beginning, it had been decided that the war would continue until the objectives were achieved, including the enemy becoming remorseful and desperate and the removal

of the long-term threat against the country. Thus, the war has continued until today, the 40th day. Iran has also repeatedly rejected the deadlines set by the American president and continues to stress that it attaches no importance to any kind of deadline imposed by the enemy.

Now we give glad tidings to the great nation of Iran that almost all the objectives of the war have been achieved, and that our brave sons have brought the enemy to a historic, helpless, and lasting defeat. Accordingly, given Iran's upper hand on the battlefield, the enemy's inability to carry out its threats despite all its claims, and its official acceptance of all the rightful demands of the Iranian people, it was decided that, in order to finalize the details, negotiations would be held in Islamabad. Within a maximum of fifteen days, the details of Iran's victory in the field would also be consolidated in political negotiations. Iran, while rejecting all plans put forward by the enemy, drafted a ten-point plan and presented it to the American side through Pakistan.

In it, Iran emphasizes fundamental points such as controlled passage through the Strait of Hormuz; the necessity of ending the war against all components of the Axis of Resistance; the withdrawal of American combat forces from all bases and deployment points in the region; the establishment of a secure transit protocol in the Strait of Hormuz in such a way that Iran's dominance, according to the agreed protocol, would be guaranteed; full payment of Iran's damages according to assessments; the lifting of all primary and secondary sanctions and all Board of Governors and Security Council resolutions; the release of all Iranian funds and assets frozen abroad; and finally, the adoption of all these matters in a binding Security Council resolution.

It should be noted that passage of this resolution would turn all these agreements into binding international law and create a major diplomatic victory for the Iranian nation. Now, the respected Prime Minister of Pakistan has informed Iran that, despite all its apparent threats, the American side has accepted these principles as the basis for negotiations and has surrendered to the will of the Iranian nation. On this basis, it was decided at the highest level that Iran would engage in negotiations with the American side in Islamabad for two weeks, and solely on the basis of these principles. It is emphasized that this does not mean the end of the war, and Iran will accept the end of the war only when, given the acceptance of the principles envisaged by Iran's ten-point plan, the details are also finalized in negotiations.

These negotiations will begin in Islamabad on Friday the 21st, under complete distrust toward the American side, and Iran will allocate two weeks for them. If the enemy's surrender on the battlefield is transformed into a decisive political achievement in negotiations, then together we will celebrate this great historic victory. Otherwise, side by side on the battlefield, we will continue to fight until all the demands of the Iranian nation are achieved. Our hands remain on the trigger, and the slightest mistake by the enemy will be met with full force. Yes, so I think this is the key to understanding what Iran is trying to portray at the moment inside the country, in order to explain what is happening to its own people. I find a couple of things very important. First and foremost, the fear of Brian Berletic that Iran might let its guard down.

No, I must say, Brian actually says in the video that he doesn't think Iran will let its guard down, but that this is, of course, a ploy to achieve that. And to me, it seems very clear that Iran is signaling, "No, we are completely distrusting of the United States. What we are doing here is simply in line with our strategy, because the enemy—I mean, the United States—has basically agreed to use the ten-point plan, not their own fifteen-point plan, as they're trying to say in the U.S., I mean, as the U.S. president is trying to portray it. And not the fifteen-point plan—the ten-point plan by Iran—which includes all their core demands and is going to serve as the basis."

However, I must also point out that even in this statement, the Iranians are very careful to say that these ten points are not necessarily what will become the final treaty—the peace treaty they are aspiring to achieve—but that this is the basis for negotiation. So the Iranians, even at this point, leave some wiggle room for what the final peace treaty could mean. Now, back to the criticism of Brian Berletic: he's saying that, of course, the United States will only use this ceasefire and this pause in fighting to regroup, rearm, reload, and then fire again.

And his prediction is that, as night follows day, the next attack on Iran will follow this one. So the question then is, why would Iran agree to this? Well, the answer is that it's obviously also in Iran's interest at the moment, because they too might actually benefit from a pause in fighting and from time to regroup, rearm, reload, and just have a break from the destruction wrought on their country. I cannot at this point properly speculate whether or not the threat of nuclear annihilation by Donald Trump played any role in this.

But considering that the Iranians are saying it's the 10-point peace plan that is going to be the basis, and considering that Donald Trump is saying that the 10-point peace plan is acceptable to the United States as a basis, it seems to me that we are in a situation where the United States was actually forced—and Donald Trump was forced—to take this route. To me, that signals that something happened behind the scenes that made it somehow impossible in Washington to further contemplate a nuclear attack on Iran. That's something we simply don't know at this point. But the one thing we do know is that even the Americans are currently saying that the 10-point plan will be the basis.

Of course, Donald Trump is now trying to say that this is their victory—you know, that they've won, achieved everything, and that the Strait of Hormuz will be open. But the Strait of Hormuz was never properly closed. Iran never had that as a goal. Their new goal now is to be in charge of the Strait of Hormuz and to be able to charge for ships passing through it. If that actually becomes the negotiated diplomatic outcome of all this, then it's a very humbling result for the U.S. war coalition. Iran might even, under the treaty, be allowed to charge money for ships going through there—and that seems to be the goal. I also want to emphasize again that Iran is being very strategic here. What they want is a treaty. What they want is binding international law.

And they're actually demanding a Security Council resolution on this, which means that if they want to get it, they have to make sure the United States doesn't veto it, right? So they want to push this on the Americans—to force them, even inside the Security Council, to withdraw the UN sanctions on

them, and then to actually agree to enter into this binding treaty. The Security Council is, of course, currently the highest kind of international lawmaking body in the system we have. These are very, very strong demands. Whether any of this will actually come through is another question. Brian Berletik predicts that it will not—that the United States will never say yes to this, and that it's at best a strategy for delay.

But again, it seems that the Iranians, under complete distrust and with their finger on the trigger, as they put it, see that there's something in it for them as well in agreeing to a ceasefire for now. The other threat, of course, is that Israel could act as a spoiler. Although what we heard today from the Israelis is that they too will keep to these terms and stop the bombing of Iran. However, they're saying that Lebanon is not part of this, and that the operation in Lebanon will continue. And of course, for Iran, Lebanon and the entire axis of resistance are part and parcel of the agreement. So all of this is on very, very thin ice, and it might collapse at any moment if people start shooting again. But at least for now, as we're recording this in the afternoon of April 8th—early morning hours of April 8th in the United States—it's holding.

We haven't heard of any incident yet that would spoil the whole thing. But of course, the chances for spoilers and for deception are quite high. I just want to emphasize again that the Iranians are making quite maximalist—not only demands, but also assurances—to their own people, saying they've achieved the enemy's agreement to use their plan as a basis and to move forward with their demands. At the same time, they leave open that the final agreement might include different points, and that now the negotiations will start again. Of course, Iran has had very negative experiences with the United States, having been attacked during negotiations twice.

So it really wouldn't be a surprise at all if these attacks just continued. But then again, one really needs to wonder at this point—who have the Americans attacked and killed who isn't replaceable, who wasn't already considered replaceable before? Killing Ali Khamenei, the former supreme leader, didn't help. Now his son is supreme leader. They killed the leadership in the IRGC. They even killed the leadership in the Iranian Security Council, and that didn't help either. The next guard just came up and started serving Ali and the Iranian nation. So the system itself has proven to be extremely resilient, even though every person is mortal. Of course, everybody is—but the system itself seems stable.

So the United States is really confronted here with basically an infinite supply of new leadership that isn't giving in, that keeps up with the strategy, and a military that, even last weekend, was able to shoot down U.S. military airplanes—Black Hawks—probably to prevent a special operations forces attack on one of their nuclear facilities. You know, the kind of thing Iran was able to do to the United States. And despite U.S. assurances that it had full and complete control over Iranian airspace, they still shot down U.S. airplanes. I mean, that must have really driven the message home. And that's probably why the U.S. president, in all of his very unhinged tweets—not only insulting the Iranians at every turn but also threatening them with nuclear annihilation—well, something, even if it hasn't fully clicked, is being registered in Washington as a major threat.

And maybe, if this is not a shift in tactics, then at least it's a new phase—even if it's still the same tactic of trying to just rearm, reload, and then hit again. Iran is apparently under the impression that, right now, the goals of the war can potentially be achieved in Islamabad. I think it's important to recall Karl von Clausewitz, the very famous 19th-century German military thinker, who said that war is the continuation of diplomacy by other means—which, if you invert it, of course means that diplomacy is the continuation of war by other means. And to me, the most likely thinking in Tehran is that now that the U.S. has actually agreed to use the ten-point plan, you might as well continue the war at the negotiating table in Islamabad.

And if that fails at any point, you go back to war—to the fighting war. So, in a sense, Iran has nothing to lose by agreeing to this deal, to actually continuing the negotiations. On the contrary, if the bombing stops even just for a couple of days, that's already something that, well, I suppose, would be welcomed by a lot of people. And ideally, this would then, of course, lead to what they could claim as a victory for the future, right? I mean, even if just a good number of these points are fulfilled. Most importantly, of course, the United States agreeing and verifiably withdrawing from the Middle East—taking their troops out, just leaving, packing up, and going home.

That would be a huge achievement for Iran. The criticism here is, of course, that even without those troops, the United States will still have the ability to threaten Iran—and that's true. I mean, the United States has long-range and intercontinental ballistic missiles. Those will always be a threat. But then again, those intercontinental ballistic missiles will never, under any conceivable scenario, go away. So they're not actually one of the Iranians' goals. What the Iranians want is to remove the immediate capacity to project power against them in the region—the ships and the soldiers. They want them out. Interestingly enough, there's also the linking of the axis of resistance to this whole thing.

And please note that the eradication of Israel, or the dismantling of the Zionist state as the Iranians sometimes call it, is not part of the ten points. The Iranians are not aiming to dismantle or destroy Israel. They actually don't really talk about Israel, at least not in these ten points. They're focusing very narrowly on the Americans' ability to hurt them and on basically convincing them now—and apparently, they've gotten at least somewhere with this strategy—to kind of force them to come to some form of understanding about how to create a security structure. Although I must say, at this point it seems that in these ten points, security guarantees from Russia and China are not available.

So Iran is not counting on external forces to create some form of security structure. It's quite interesting. This is very different from what we're seeing in Ukraine, of course, where Ukraine keeps saying that only if the Europeans and the Americans give security guarantees can they be secure. The Iranians do not want to be dependent on outside forces. Their strategy is a different one: it's the ability to inflict pain if pain is inflicted upon them, and they will continue with that. They will not demand that Russia or China perform any kind of services for them. I'm pretty sure that Iran is grateful for help coming from Beijing and from Moscow, but they do not want to rely on it.

And this is also in line with what we've seen before. All the security arrangements they've made with the two other great powers were designed so that Iran wouldn't make any binding promises to them, nor demand any binding promises in return. It's a strategy of self-reliance. Self-reliance, of course, always comes at a cost. The cost is that you can't rely solely on yourself against every conceivable future threat—although Iran has made it quite clear that it's not just a threat. It's an underdog, fighting an underdog war against a much larger power. It's not fighting an asymmetric war; it's waging a symmetric one. And that was the main point of the previous forty days.

Every single pain point that the Americans and Israelis can inflict on Iran, Iran can meet with a similar kind of pain in the U.S. or in Israel—especially when it comes to the economy. And I don't know, at this point, how the Iranians could counter the threat of a nuclear attack on their homeland with an equivalent threat. I don't know what it is. Maybe... maybe an attack on Israel's nuclear power plants—maybe that was one. I have no idea. But one thing I'm pretty sure of is that the Iranians have had, and still have, a plan for what to do if nukes were dropped on their territory, and that it would not be just to take out the desalination plants of the Gulf states. Because the Gulf states, while important staging grounds for U.S. forces, are not the main pain points of the U.S. or the Israelis.

I mean, both of them can live without the Gulf states, even if the Gulf states were completely eradicated. The U.S. and Israel would survive, right? So the real threat—the real threat scenario—you have to develop is one against mainland Israel and mainland United States.

And I don't know how the Iranians did that, or what their thinking was—what they might have communicated to the Americans secretly—but I'm pretty sure they did have a plan. I believe that, at this point, if the ceasefire holds, if the negotiations move forward, and if this actually becomes fruitful, then the Americans must have started believing that Iran's conventional second-strike capability would have persisted. And that's the pain they could still inflict, probably on Israel, if they were struck with a nuclear weapon. That would still be absolutely devastating. We don't know what that is. Ted Postol, of course, is saying that it's most likely Iran has already achieved some form of nuclear device that could be mounted on a missile and launched at Israel—that Tel Aviv or Haifa could be eradicated, maybe even with the conventional weapons Iran still possesses. And something like that might have been the threat level that convinced the other side to agree to such a huge concession.

I mean, agreeing to these ten points—making them the backbone—is actually a huge concession from the United States. Although the U.S. is framing it in their internal discourse as a victory of theirs, as if they forced the Iranians to reopen the Strait of Hormuz. But that's fine. That is fine. This is, of course, what they have to tell themselves. In the absence of complete surrender and complete victory, both sides in such a conflict need to develop cooperation—a narrative they can use and tell themselves and their own population—and then future historians can go and deconstruct that. But for the time being, that is actually very much needed.

So this is actually, to me, a good sign that both sides have some form of narrative they can try to spin in their own ways. Although I must say, the Iranian narrative at this point, to me, is much more convincing—especially because they did maintain the ability to strike back. Their ability to strike back and inflict pain on the U.S. and Israel is not gone, and they can return to that. So the fact that they now said, “Okay, fine, let's try to continue the war by other means and go to diplomacy,” signals to me that, at least in their conception, under their strategy, they've managed to make a step forward, and they're now trying to explain that step.

So I don't know if there's anything else to cover here. I think we went through it. If you want to read the entire text, it's on my Substack—that's pascal.lottaz.substack.com. Sorry, pascal.lottaz.substack.com. I'm getting my own Substack wrong. “Iran Declares Interim Victory.” We'll follow what's happening. Fingers crossed that somehow we get out of this entire mess. It would be a great, great achievement, because of how close we came last night to the use of nuclear weapons. I think we were closer again than during the entire Cuban Missile Crisis. Fingers crossed that we stepped away from the brink. Thank you very much.