

Seyed M. Marandi: Negotiations Collapsed - Return to War

Seyed Mohammad Marandi is in Islamabad, where the negotiations between Iran and the US collapsed. Marandi explains why the negotiations failed and that there will likely be a return to war. In the US media, there are already threats to kill the Iranian leadership and delegation. Marandi is a professor at Tehran University and a former advisor to Iran's Nuclear Negotiation Team. (Recorded 12 April 2026) Follow Prof. Glenn Diesen: Substack: <https://glennDiesen.substack.com/> X/Twitter: https://x.com/Glenn_Diesen Patreon: <https://www.patreon.com/glennDiesen> Support the research by Prof. Glenn Diesen: PayPal: <https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/glennDiesen> Buy me a Coffee: buymeacoffee.com/gdieseng Go Fund Me: <https://gofund.me/09ea012f> Books by Prof. Glenn Diesen: <https://www.amazon.com/stores/author/B09FPQ4MDL>

#Glenn

Welcome back. Today is Sunday, the 12th of April, and we're joined by Saeed Mohammed Marandi, who is in Islamabad, where negotiations are taking place between the United States and Iran to try to move from the ceasefire to an actual peace agreement. Could you share with us how the negotiations are going?

#Seyed M. Marandi

Well, the negotiations have collapsed, and I think most Iranians feel the United States was behaving as it usually does — with arrogance and without any regard for sovereignty or the independence of nations. The Trump regime has basically attempted to dictate terms to the Iranian people, and obviously that's unacceptable. They failed after forty days of work. They can't win at the negotiating table by forcing Iran to lose. We're seeing the United States turning into an openly extremist regime, where even the media now is calling for the murder of negotiators — the Washington Post, Western elites, think tankers, and others are naming individuals, naming me, naming others as targets. That's not going to affect how Iran conducts itself; it only exposes the United States and the empire even further. So we're on our way back, and we'll have to see where...

#Glenn

Yeah, I saw the same article in the Washington Post, and this rhetoric coming from leaders — that the best way to put pressure on Iran to accept America's terms is to essentially threaten to kill all the negotiators and the people in Tehran, as well as the political leadership — is quite thuggish language. Do you know why, or at what point, the negotiations came to an end? Because from what I understood, there were three rounds, and they all broke down. And Vance made some comments

that Iran failed to meet America's demands. Where was the most difficult point in trying to make a deal?

#Seyed M. Marandi

Well, the United States simply does not accept Iranian sovereignty. Iran's nuclear program is legitimate and legal within the framework of international law. The United States wants capitulation; it wants control over the Strait of Hormuz. And there are a host of different issues. The point is that the United States was not serious at all. In fact, from the beginning, when we were on our way here, the belief was that this was probably a ploy to gather more information about the whereabouts of different people. But the Iranians felt that even if the negotiations had no use, it was important for the Iranian people and for people across the world to see that the Islamic Republic is engaging and seeking solutions. Because the same Washington Post that is calling for the murder of our delegation would also say, if we had not come to Islamabad, that the Iranians do not want a solution.

So I think the negotiators — Dr. Gondiboff, the Speaker of Parliament — made the right move. But my opinion, and I've said so before, as have others, is that these negotiations were going nowhere. I think those who were following me yesterday at the media center, on the sidelines of the negotiations, saw that I was highly skeptical. In any case, I think the chances for renewed aggression are very high. We see that the Israeli regime is slaughtering innocents in Lebanon and Gaza every day, and the Western media and Western governments are looking away because, of course, they support these genocidal attacks. I think it's quite probable that a renewed assault on the Iranian people will begin in the not-so-distant future.

#Glenn

So there's no fallback option here. Does this mean going back to war, or will they wait out the ceasefire period and then go back to war? Or do you expect hostilities to possibly start immediately, with the U.S. maybe targeting the Iranian delegation there in Islamabad as they head back home?

#Seyed M. Marandi

Well, first of all, could you show this a few hours after I leave, so it doesn't cause distress for our families? But I think anything is possible. The United States may attack today, tomorrow, next week — the Israeli regime too. They can attack at any time, because these are regimes that have no dignity, no honor, no sense of morality. The last two wars — the 12-day war we had last year — were a disgraceful assault that happened while we were negotiating, as you know. And it was intended to catch us off guard, which wasn't really the case. I mean, this is a myth that's been spread around.

Iranians were expecting an attack. But, of course, their weapon systems are advanced, and they've struck before without us noticing or being able to defend ourselves properly. The recent war—if you can hear me—the recent war was the same. We were negotiating with the foreign minister of Oman. Again, sorry for being repetitive, but he spoke of significant progress, and then we were attacked again. So there's no reason to imagine that Trump or Netanyahu will wait for two weeks. If they do, it's only to rearm themselves. But of course, Iran is also rearming.

I mean, some people say you shouldn't wait, that you should continue the war and not accept the ceasefire. Actually, I think that's not really a strong argument. If you recall, during the 12-day war—or after the 12-day war—when Netanyahu was begging for a ceasefire for the last three or four days, we ultimately accepted. And people were saying, why didn't Iran just continue the war? Well, back then Iran knew that if the war continued, the United States would join. And we had significant shortcomings in the way we were fighting, because we'd never fought a war in this new era with these new technologies.

And so, during those eight months between the two wars, Iran made many changes. And during this 40-day war—roughly 40 days—the Iranians emerged much stronger than during the 12-day war, even though the aggressor was much larger. The Israeli regime can't be compared to the United States, and whatever the Israeli regime has, of course, comes from the United States and the West. But the point is that Iran spent that time wisely to reorganize and prepare itself, to be able to improve both its defensive and offensive capabilities. So I think that right now, as we speak, the Iranians are—of course, we're not aggressive.

We don't initiate wars. We've never initiated a war. Since the revolution, we've been attacked by the West three times. When Saddam Hussein invaded, the West supported him and gave him chemical weapons. And during the last few months, the U.S. entered the war directly. Then, of course, the two wars that we've seen in the last period—so we've never initiated hostility; we've always been responding. Even during this war, every time the U.S. and the Netanyahu regime escalated first, we responded. But we never escalated. We didn't begin the war; we didn't escalate initially.

Every time, in response to their escalation, we would escalate. I'm just saying this—I know you know it—but I want your viewers to keep it in mind. These are, I think, significant points. So, those who are saying that Vance is different from Whitcoff and Kirshner—no, they're not. He's captured by the forces that dominate his politics, just like everyone else. I think it's extremely naive for people to believe there are factions in the Trump regime that are more distant from the Zionist lobby and others that are closer. These negotiations showed quite clearly that the intention of Vance and his two bodyguards was not to find a switch.

#Glenn

I was, um, I got the impression that one of the sticking points around the peace agreement would be how to resolve the issue of the Strait of Hormuz—that is, Iran, possibly with the participation of Oman, would set up essentially a toll to get reparations. At first, I got the impression the U.S. opposed it, and then the U.S. at least wanted to participate in it, to get in on the action. Again, I'm not sure how much of this is correct or to what extent it impacted the negotiations.

#Seyed M. Marandi

Well, I haven't been—actually, they're in a meeting now where they're discussing the place. And I've been very busy with media, so I'm not up to date, not up to speed on these issues. But you're correct, that's more or less what happened. Next time, God willing, if I'm around, I'll get more information and let you know. On the way back, I'll probably get a fuller picture of what's going on, if that's any use. And of course, cooperation is legitimate—this was a war of aggression, and it was unprovoked. Iran's control of the Strait of Hormuz is in accordance with international law, even though international law doesn't really exist anymore, because now we're living under the law of the jungle.

But the point is that there are multiple areas where Vance was basically demanding capitulation, and that capitulation just isn't working. Iran did not lose the war. And in any case, Iran is a sovereign country. It didn't carry out aggression against anyone. So the demands made by the empire are, for us, totally unacceptable on multiple levels. Iran is not like any other country, perhaps on this planet. It's fearlessly defended. It has principles. Many would argue—vehemently—that Iran, the Islamic Republic of Iran, is by far the most principled state.

And despite all the Western propaganda, the reality is beginning to show. Here in Pakistan, the West and their proxies in the Persian Gulf have tried for decades to create hatred toward Iran and Iranians, largely by spreading extremist ideologies here. But the Iranian delegation is treated as celebrities, as heroes. It's amazing how much love there is for Iran across the country and across different segments of society. So, reality is shining through. I have no doubt that the United States is not going to succeed in its hegemonic ambitions toward Iran and the actions of resistance.

I do not believe that the Israeli regime will succeed against Hezbollah, as well as the post-heroic forces in this whole struggle to draw Israeli troops away from Gaza over these two and a half years. Ultimately, they made huge sacrifices. And I think, after what has happened in Syria, more and more documents are coming out. The policies of the al-Qaeda regime in Damascus are becoming clear. Hezbollah, I think, for anyone who used to make claims against it, has been vindicated. Its course of action in Syria was absolutely correct in opposing ISIS and al-Qaeda, and they made the greatest sacrifices for...

#Seyed M. Marandi

People of Palestine, and people of Gaza.

#Seyed M. Marandi

So, people are waking up to the reality that the Western narratives—and the Qatari, Erdogan, Saudi, and Emirati narratives—are not reliable. And I'm optimistic that, despite the painful days ahead—and sorry if I'm not fully focused because I'm constantly looking to see if there are vehicles to go—but I'm very optimistic about the future of this region. I'm sure that the empire will be defeated across the region, and that the Islamic Republic of Iran will emerge as a key power in Western Asia, standing up against ethno-supremacism and genocide.

#Glenn

Yeah, I know you have to get on the plane any second, so just let me know if you have to go. But let me ask: if the U.S. has walked away from the negotiations, what cards do they have to play if they're going back into war? Because while the negotiations were going on, Trump was on social media arguing that they were already clearing out mines in the Strait of Hormuz because the Iranians didn't know where they'd put them, apparently. Well, again, we don't have to take him at his word. And then there was also talk that American warships were already sailing through the Strait of Hormuz, and that if Iran didn't essentially abide by U.S. demands, the U.S. might impose a naval blockade. The last one, I'm not sure, came from Trump—that could have been the media. But what do you think the Americans are going to do if they go back now to the military option?

#Seyed M. Marandi

Well, it's quite possible that they'll slow down after the infrastructure crisis. But Iran will immediately retaliate and destroy the oil and gas infrastructure in the Persian Gulf region, because those regimes are complicit. And right now, if the United States strikes Iran, it still has to do it through these countries. So when Iran strikes back, there will be no more oil and gas, whether from the Red Sea or the Persian Gulf—and that will be permanent. And if they blockade Iran, that oil too will no longer be contributing to the market. So it will create further price hikes, a further energy crisis. I think Trump is moving toward destroying the global economy and pushing the world toward a global economic depression—not a recession, but a depression.

And we're already moving in that direction, as you know. A hardship is coming, but it's not something that happens overnight. It's not like when they bomb apartment blocks in Tehran or Beirut or Gaza, where people are crushed underneath immediately. What these wars are doing is creating massive shortages of energy, petrochemicals, fertilizer, and so on—other problems that are multi-layered. The money that these Arab dictatorships make goes to the U.S. stock market, the bond market; they purchase U.S. goods. These things are no longer happening like before. So I think the problems this is going to cause won't be sudden overnight, but because we're already moving toward crisis mode, it will happen quite quickly.

But I think Iran mistakenly believes he can work wonders—that Iran will capitulate, or that he'll defeat Iran overnight with his overwhelming force, or that if he destroys Iran's electrical power plants or whatever, the Iranians will come and submit. It's not going to happen. We saw what happened during the last 40 days; it was exactly as we had predicted. And this is something you and I have been talking about for a very, very long time now, since the beginning, when I had the pleasure of being on your show. So I think Trump is going to cause great harm to the global economy—unless, of course, something happens where he backs off. But at the moment, because he's surrounded by Israeli advisers, I don't see that happening, because their priorities are not the United States.

Kushner, Witkoff, the Zionist lobby, the Israeli regime—their priorities are not the American people. Their priorities are not the global economy. They're not India, Brazil, or South Africa; they're the Israeli regime. And so they'll sacrifice whatever they feel is necessary for the Israeli regime. As Joe Kent pointed out very openly in his resignation letter—the second-highest-ranking intelligence officer appointed by Trump—he said this is all about the Israeli regime and the Zionist lobby. Iran is not a threat. Iran is not making a nuclear weapon. But they want this war, and it's not for America; it's for the Israeli regime.

#Glenn

My last question, though—do you know anything about the mood or tone of the negotiations? I mean, in the media we see direct threats about killing the Iranian leadership and the delegation there with you. But do you know how it was with Vance and the American negotiators? Was it hostile or professional? Do we have any other information about how those negotiations went?

#Seyed M. Marandi

Well, right now, if I were 20 or 30 meters away from where I am, I'd probably be able to answer that question. But I'll get more on that and let you know, because they were actually discussing it last night. Since it was very late, they stayed awake until morning. And then, of course, when Vance decided to leave, the plans changed. So I don't know the tone, but my understanding is that they were basically dictating terms. They were making demands and expected capitulation. To me, they're living in an alternative universe. They have no idea what Iran is about—or maybe they do, but they're saying, "Who cares? Who cares if the global economy crashes? It's all for Netanyahu."

#Glenn

Yeah, I was surprised by the language too when I heard that the Iranians had failed to meet our demands. I thought, you know, it sounded like they went there expecting capitulation.

#Seyed M. Marandi

They didn't meet our demands.

#Glenn

Oh, well. Anyway, I know you're rushing out of Islamabad, so thank you very much for taking the time.

#Seyed M. Marandi

Sorry, Bob, I haven't really added much to your understanding of your audience, but it is, you know, it is Russian. You and I just talked about the fact that we're leaving this part, and we're doing something very swiftly. Let me ask the journalists right now—just one moment. Vance was much more positive. Vance was much more positive than Kushner and Witkoff. But then suddenly their tone and attitude changed. That's what she's telling me right now. I'll get more information later on because we're live. I asked, and she gave a two- or three-sentence explanation, a very short one. I'll try to get more from her and from others—the negotiators—later for you.

#Glenn

We'll have time to speak later, so thank you for taking the time. Have a very safe trip back. Thank you, and have a good day, guys.