

Why Trump Can't Exit the Iran Conflict | Mohammad Marandi

In this exclusive interview, Mohammad Marandi breaks down the reality behind the Iran-US negotiations, Trump's inability to secure a deal, the role of Israel and the Zionist lobby, and how Iranians view the outcome of the conflict. Why does Washington keep talking about an imminent agreement with Iran while war rhetoric continues? Is Trump genuinely trying to end the conflict, or is he trapped between domestic politics, Israel, and the need for a "victory narrative"? We also discuss: * Why the Iran-US deal keeps collapsing * Trump, Netanyahu, and the pressure of the Israel lobby * Whether the US empire can rethink its own strategic interests * Hezbollah's importance to Iran and the Palestinian cause * Why Palestine remains central to the conflict * How ordinary Iranians view the war and the Iranian government * The future of US power in West Asia Mohammad Marandi offers a sharp analysis of the geopolitical struggle shaping the Middle East and the declining leverage of the United States. #Iran #Trump #MohammadMarandi #IranUS #Hezbollah #Palestine #Israel #MiddleEast #Geopolitics #USPolitics #IranWar #Netanyahu #ResistanceAxis #WestAsia

#Mudiar

Hello and welcome to another episode of India and Global Left. If you are new to the show, please hit that subscribe button. Also, consider becoming a YouTube member, a patron, or donating a small amount using the link in the description box. Without further ado, let me welcome our guest tonight, Professor Mohammad Marandi. Professor Marandi is from Iran, and he teaches at the University of Tehran. Professor Marandi, welcome back to India and Global Left.

#Marandi

Thank you very much for inviting me. It's always a great pleasure.

#Mudiar

I wanted to start with a broad question. How would you describe what's going on between the United States and Iran at this moment?

#Marandi

Well, Iran is dealing with people who are not very sane, so we have to manage. That's as far as I can go. There's nothing else to say.

#Mudiar

We've been hearing from the administration, and the mainstream media has been reiterating or repeating that line that a deal with Iran is imminent. Iranian media and Iranian officials have been very suspicious of it. My own sense is that the Trump administration has been doing it to at least placate the market, keep the future prices of oil lower than the actual delivery price of the physical oil, and also, perhaps—not perhaps, but to contain the domestic sentiment, given this war is so unpopular in the United States. What is your sense of why we've been hearing about an imminent deal?

#Marandi

You're correct. Based on what Trump has been saying in his most recent Truth Social posts, we do not yet have a deal. Iran's conditions are clear. They're not going to change. Trump will have to accept those conditions; otherwise, there won't be a deal. And it doesn't really bother the Iranians if Trump manipulates the markets. The more he pours oil from U.S. strategic reserves onto the market and talks down the market price, that's actually helpful to Iran because Iran wants to prevent demand destruction. Iran wants consumption to remain high so that U.S. and Western strategic reserves finish sooner rather than later. And that is going to ultimately put them in a very, very difficult situation. Managing or manipulating the market like this is doable, is manageable, up to a point. But once those reserves begin to finish and people recognize that this crisis is much bigger than they were told, things will spiral out of control.

And we're getting there. From what experts are saying, the month of June will be very decisive for the oil market. And oil is a part of the problem. It's also LNG, it's helium, it's fertilizers, it's everything. It's all sorts of things that are produced at countries, at petrochemical plants in the Persian Gulf. And of course, there are other things that are produced in the region that are energy-intensive, which are also missing from the market. This is a catastrophe for the United States, but Trump can hide it for a while, and he's making it far worse for the reasons I explained. Because since there is very little demand destruction, there's a lot of complacency and consumption is high. Governments are not preparing themselves, people are not preparing themselves, and this is going to put Trump in a very, very bad situation.

#Mudiar

And why do you think Trump is unable to roll back or get an off-ramp? Is it still the clout of the Israel lobby? Or is it a genuine disagreement about what to do with the stock of 490 kg of 60% enriched uranium or the future of the Strait of Hormuz? Or is he actually trying to find a way to get an off-ramp with a narrative of victory? Why is he unable to get an off-ramp?

#Marandi

I think his biggest problem by far is the Zionist lobby. The Zionist lobby, the Israeli regime, they've destroyed the global economy, and it is getting worse by the hour. And when Trump recognized what a bad situation he and Netanyahu had created—something which, I mean, we shouldn't have had war in the first place—it's an illegal and criminal war that they carried out. But after 39 days, when they were defeated, Netanyahu and Trump, there could have been a ceasefire where oil and other goods could have flowed through the Strait of Hormuz. But then we all recall that Netanyahu wrecked the ceasefire deal by carpet bombing Lebanon, and that prevented Iran from allowing those extra ships to pass through. Remember, the Strait of Hormuz was never closed.

It was only closed to countries that were complicit in the war against Iran, for good reason. So Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the Emirates, and Qatar, who helped slaughter all those 3,500 or so Iranians, their ships were blocked. But Chinese ships, Russian ships, Indian ships, Pakistani ships, Bangladeshi ships, Japanese ships, and others have been passing through the strait. Every day, roughly 25, 20, 30 ships are going through the strait at the moment. But we were going to have a ceasefire where many more ships would pass through, and the global economy would have been able to be saved from this huge crisis, if only Netanyahu had not carpet bombed Beirut, slaughtering hundreds of people to ruin the ceasefire agreement. But so what is happening now?

Trump has recognized that things are getting much worse. It's been over three months now, and the crisis is growing, and it's having a snowball effect. And ultimately, this is going to blow up in his face. So he wants a deal, and we almost had a deal. The two sides were very close. And then, as expected, the Zionist lobby, the Israeli regime, they were outraged, they were angry, and they started pushing back. And Trump, being the really weak and cowardly president that he is, backed down immediately. So we were close to a deal, and now it seems from his rhetoric that we've been hearing over the past few days and today as well, that we are further away from a deal. But Iran's position will not change. So all he's doing is making the global economy move towards a much more dangerous situation.

#Mudiar

How long do you think he'd be forced by the Zionist lobby? I'm asking this given the objective conditions that he is facing are so dire. The direct economic impact on the U.S. economy, including inflation and, effectively, interest rates and therefore growth. The future of the petrodollar system, given all the expenses that the Gulf economies are incurring in the military, effectively leaving much fewer investments that were plugged into the transatlantic dollar system that solidified the petrodollar system. Given the strain on the military-industrial complex, critical resources having to be diverted from South Korea and Taiwan into West Asia. One can go on and on about what he is facing. And these are the objective conditions that tell us that he is desperate to get an off-ramp. But then there is the Zionist lobby. So I'm just thinking about forces of history — how long do you think the Zionist lobby will be able to hold on and keep forcing him into this war?

#Marandi

I think a key objective of Iran is to try to put enough pressure on the United States to make it have to prioritize the United States over the Israeli regime. So until now, the United States has sacrificed its own people for the Israeli regime. That has always been the case. And this has become much more evident since 9/11. 9/11, of course, most probably, from the evidence we now see, the Mossad was probably involved. And they used Al-Qaeda, which is a tool of the West, to carry out this attack. And then we saw Wesley Clark speak, tell how a general told him of a plan to take out seven countries in five years.

And six of those countries have been effectively overthrown, and we've reached the last country now. The only problem is that that five-year plan took almost 25 years instead. And thanks to Iran, the United States has paid a heavy price on the way — the empire — because the Iranians helped the resistance in Iraq. It helped the resistance in Afghanistan. It helped the resistance, of course, in Yemen. It helped the resistance in Syria, although the U.S. proxies, Al-Qaeda and ISIS forces, did come to power, but they've been severely weakened — this brutal and barbaric Takfiri force of the West. It's been badly weakened.

But in any case, the United States has spent tens of trillions of dollars on these forever wars. But the biggest defeat by far, as Robert Kagan has pointed out in his article in *The Atlantic* — Kagan being the godfather of the neocons and the husband of a major neocon — he said this is the greatest defeat in American history, contemporary American history, 21st, 20th century. So the United States today has to make a decision. Since 9/11, the United States has been pursuing an Israeli project in our region, and the price has been much higher than expected. And for the reasons that I said, thanks to General Soleimani and Ayatollah Khamenei, it helped the resistance against occupation.

#Marandi

The United States became weaker and weaker, but it was always a prioritization of the Israeli regime. This was all about Israel. All of what happened — I mean, there are many objectives in Iraq and Afghanistan: the minerals, the oil. But at the end of the day, these policies were pursued because of the Israeli regime. That was their priority, and so it was America's priority. And the attack on Iran, the war against Iran — same objective. And now the United States has spent tens of trillions of dollars, and in this war, it's going to get much worse than in previous wars. And the economic crisis emerging in the United States — this crisis is building up for multiple reasons.

The never-ending wars that I explained, but also the neoliberal policies that have been pursued, especially after the collapse of the Soviet Union — that has brought a situation where today the United States is on the brink of something very dark. It's already in a very bad situation, but it's on the brink of something very dark. And the United States has to make a decision: does it want to go into that darkness, or does it want to find a solution? If it prioritizes the Israeli regime, then it will go into darkness. If it makes a decision to prioritize itself for once, then I still think it's going to get very bad, but at least they'll be able to soften the blow.

#Mudiar

Let's just assume the U.S. could prioritize itself, and I'm talking about the empire itself prioritizing itself. I'm not saying the U.S. prioritizing itself with great excitement. Would that mean that the issue would effectively come down to the Strait of Hormuz and the enriched uranium? Or would it also include all the other sets of issues that seem to me at the moment to have taken a backseat? I mean, they're still talking about Iranian allies in the region, but things like regime change, things like ending civilization — I mean, everyone now knows these are jokes or just hot air. They have failed miserably in all these regards. I mean, they ought to fail. What would that mean if, for once, the U. S. could prioritize itself?

#Marandi

It would mean that it would sign the deal that has been discussed over the past few weeks. The Iranians are going to maintain control of the Strait of Hormuz. That's not going to change, come what may. The Iranians are not going to give up their sovereignty or their peaceful nuclear program. The Iranians are going to demand their assets that were stolen by the United States, and up front, half of those stolen assets are going to have to be handed over. Iran will demand that the siege on ports by the Trump regime come to an end. And Iran will demand that the war in Lebanon, the Zionist war against the Lebanese people, come to an end. These are conditions that are not going to change.

And we almost had an agreement, and Trump, simply by walking away and ranting and raving and carrying out a couple of airstrikes or murdering a few soldiers for no justification, he's not going to change that at all. So if he walks away, we'll just sit here. We'll wait until he decides to come back. But while we're waiting, we're going to be looking at the U.S. strategic reserves, European reserves. We're going to be looking at how the American economy is going to deal with the situation during the month of June. And the expectation is that ultimately Trump will have to come back to the negotiating table. If not, then the global economy will collapse. We don't want this. But he and Netanyahu and the Zionists, they are imposing this on the world.

#Mudiar

It would be helpful if you could tell us a little bit about how important Hezbollah is for Iran and ultimately the cause of Palestine, given the mainstream media has tried to suppress Iranian insistence about the U.S. and Israel ending their war in Lebanon, while Iran has been very, very clear about that being an important condition for any kind of deal moving forward. The mainstream media has been making it seem as if it is all about the Strait of Hormuz and the enriched uranium, but Iran has been very, very insistent about ending the war in Lebanon, which is a very, very important element of the occupation in Palestine.

And you and I know about its acceleration of the genocide, let's say, which started, was paused to the degree it was, but there have been tremendous atrocities recently. In fact, many Palestinian analysts say that one of the reasons why Israel wants to stick to the war with Iran is to deflect global attention from Palestine so that it can continue its occupation in both the West Bank and Gaza, which they have not left since the so-called ceasefire.

#Marandi

Well, for the Iranians, the key issue of our time is the Palestinian issue. I mean, for Iran, Cuba is very important, but Palestine is the biggest issue. Iran supports Cuba. It's been supporting the Venezuelan people who've been taken hostage, and other countries and movements that have been under assault by the empire. But the Palestinian issue has been a key foreign policy issue for Iran. And that is why Iran is assaulted. That is why Hezbollah is assaulted. That is why Iran is so antagonized in the West. It's all about Palestine. Whether they say that Iran is a threat to the world because of nuclear programs, or Iran is evil and it violates human rights, or whether it is terrorism and that Iran is a terrorist regime — all of this is about one thing, and that is Palestine. The West supports ethno-supremacism, ethnic cleansing, and genocide, and Iran opposes it, so Iran is evil.

It's quite simple. It's very simple. This is exactly what it's been all about all this time. And it's becoming clearer for people across the world. People in the past, I think, many people across the world believed the Western narrative because there was no other narrative out there, no rival narrative. Iran never had much of a voice. That's why I said on your show and on other shows that people should read **Going to Tehran** by Flint and Hilary Leverett, or Alastair Crooke's book **Resistance**, or Peter Osborne's book **A Dangerous Delusion**, because there's very little out there to read. If you really want to understand Iran, most of the other books, most of the media outlets, all of them give you a warped understanding, and an understanding that is often 180 degrees different from reality.

But people, after the genocide in Gaza, across the world gradually saw that it was Iran that was supporting the Palestinians, and everyone else was either indifferent, complicit, or supporting the genocide. And gradually people woke up, and then the 12-day war happened, and then the recent war happened, and people saw the deceit of the United States. And it's not just Trump. We saw how the mainstream media, even those that oppose Trump, were supporting the destruction of Iran. They were condemning Iran during the war of the victim. So people have woken up to this reality that exists. For Iran, the Palestinian issue is a humanitarian issue. It is an issue that we can't close our eyes to.

Just like we cannot close our eyes to the Cuban issue. The Cuban government is a communist government, but we support the Cubans, the Cuban government, the Cuban people, because they're victims. So, in addition to that, we see that the Israeli regime is carrying out genocide now in Lebanon, a second genocide, and the West, of course, supports it. Why? It's very clear that the West

supports it. We remember during the genocide in Gaza, which is ongoing and getting worse by the day, and sadly, the momentum across the world, those protests, they've largely disappeared.

During the genocide, when Western media was being criticized for looking away or not reporting on the mass slaughter every day, they gave an excuse — a single excuse almost every time. And that was that, well, we don't have reporters on the ground. It was clear that people were being slaughtered — kids buried under apartment blocks, feet hanging out, you know, every day tens and sometimes hundreds of people slaughtered. And then, you know, tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, dying through disease and injuries and so on. But they used this excuse in order to help the Israeli regime — Western journalists, legacy mainstream media journalists, media outlets from The Guardian to Breitbart.

No difference. In Lebanon, we see the Western media has an enormous presence. Everyone has an office in Lebanon. Everyone has a reporter in Lebanon. They all have a presence there. But you see the reporting is no different. They'll downplay what the Israeli regime does. They'll call all those girls and boys and babies and infants that are slaughtered Hezbollah targets, or those areas will be designated Hezbollah strongholds in order to legitimize the genocide. Those journalists in Beirut, they are Epstein-class employees. They need their money. They need their checks. They have no dignity. They have no honor. They have nothing. They're empty shells, those mainstream and legacy media journalists.

And just like diplomats, Western diplomats in Beirut and elsewhere that see all this, Western diplomats across the world, instead of defecting and resigning, they're all complicit in these genocidal projects. So Iran, just as it will not accept a genocide in Gaza or ethnic cleansing of the West Bank, it will not accept the genocide in Lebanon. And now the focus of attention is on Lebanon. The slaughter, the daily slaughter, is just beyond belief. So Iran is not going to — the Americans are telling the Iranians, let the Israelis carry out the genocide and we'll have our agreement. So Iran says, no, that's not going to happen.

Just like during the past two and a half years, two years, almost three years now, the West has called on Iran to let the Palestinians be massacred, to leave, you know, stop supporting the resistance. Iran and Hezbollah and Yemen, they said no. We're not going to let you exterminate them. And so, you know, this is the difference between the West and Iran. They are uncivilized and we're civilized. They are carrying out the most evil genocide in human history. The most evil. Why? Because it's being done in front of the eyes of the world with complete impunity. We've had crimes committed in human history that are larger, but no one does it in front of a global audience like they do.

And no country that pretends to be the free world or the civilized world has behaved in the way in which the West has now, where it tries to look away. It tries its best to justify, even as its own people have turned against the Israeli regime. Still, the elites do whatever they can. They shut down debate. They take TikTok and hand it over to the Zionists. They take CNN and CBS and hand it over

to the Zionists. All the social media is controlled now by the Zionists. All the mainstream media is effectively controlled by the Zionists. And yet they still cannot hide the genocide that's being carried out in front of them, because it is being carried out in front of the global audience, and they don't care.

But then, when they saw after a year and a half that the world began to shift away from the Israeli regime with greater disgust every day, they tried to hide it. Then they took over all the social media and all the legacy media outlets, but it was too late. So they've been doing this in front of the eyes of the world. They're doing it in Lebanon in front of the eyes of the world, and everyone says no. We will not accept that. Who else will prevent or stop it from happening? Well, thank you, Mr. Erdogan. You continue to transport cheap oil from Baku, in the Republic of Azerbaijan, to help the Israelis at this time of fuel shortages across the world.

Thank you, Mr. Sisi, for purchasing gas and helping the Israeli regime. And all these Arab regimes — Netanyahu has to thank all of them for their assistance. Qatar, all Qatar does is just show the crimes on TV, but that's it. It has its own secret relations with Israel. It has helped the Americans and Israelis in Syria, in Yemen, against Iran, and it has helped fund Kushner and the Zionists. They're all complicit, to say the least. Witkoff, they're all complicit. So if Iran doesn't stand for the people of Lebanon and Palestine, then who will?

#Mudiar

Professor Marandi, if I could end by asking you one final question, and that is about how Iranians see the outcome of this conflict insofar as what has happened so far. And I'm asking this particularly because a large section of the world now sees Iran as massively important geopolitically and also globally economically, so much so that professors at the University of Chicago, very mainstream professors, have been saying that Iran has become one of the four or five big powers. What is your sense about Iranians' feelings about how the administration and government have handled this conflict? And secondly, if you could tell us a little bit about what is the overall sentiment about the government, given we've seen manufactured riots — call it whatever you like — prior to this conflict.

And that obfuscates general positive sentiment about Iranians, about their system of governance. For instance, we have discussed on this show with others about the welfare state that Iran has within it. Of course, the evaluation has to be done keeping in mind that Iran has been an economy under siege, reminding me of Michael Parenti, who, in his assessment of socialist economies, called these "socialisms under siege," meaning thereby that socialist economies never had the global system — and one economy had that, which is China, and it performed. But not to deflect from the core question, there are lots of Iranians, particularly poor Iranians, who have always had a positive sentiment about the revolution itself. So if you could sum up this conversation by educating our viewers and us about the Iranian sense of how the administration has handled the conflict.

#Marandi

Well, historically, again, those books, I think, would be very useful that I mentioned earlier to get a broader understanding. But the Iranians see that their government was not responsible for this war, and it's not responsible for the siege. Right now, siege warfare is being imposed on the Iranian people. The Americans are doing their best to starve Iran. Sometimes you see senators go on television and gloat, saying they don't have food. This is the regime that we're dealing with. The United States is... When Ayatollah Khomeini, the first leader, the person who brought about the Islamic Revolution, said America is the Great Satan, this is exactly what he was alluding to. It's a terribly evil empire.

They are the ones who enable the Israeli regime to carry out genocide. Their media enables the Zionist regime to get away with genocide. Their elites provide the theoretical framework to justify genocide. So it is a satanic regime in the eyes of Ayatollah Khomeini. And in the West, they were saying, why does he use this language? It's evident. It's obvious. You kidnap presidents. You bomb people in boats in the Mediterranean with no justification, destroying families every day. And then you just massacre people and you kidnap a president and his wife. Then you starve the people of Cuba and you say we're going to destroy the country, take the country. That's the world that it is. You know, with Trump, it's more crude, the way he says it.

But in a sense, he's only being more open about it. That's exactly what all the U.S. presidents have been doing. Trump is just the ugly face of a very ugly regime. So the Iranian people see the country, the state, as a victim. The Iranians did not provoke this war. Iran did not escalate after provocation. The Iranian demands that Trump accepted—remember, at the beginning of the war, Trump said, "Unconditional surrender, lay down your arms." And then at the end, he had to accept the Iranian 10-point plan for victory as a framework for negotiations. The Iranians saw the 10-point plan; it was a very reasonable plan. But for the Americans, it's outrageous. Why? Because they don't respect the sovereignty of other nations. And it's not just Trump.

It's the whole regime. Right now, the Iranian demands are: hand over half of our stolen assets. And the Americans say, how could we do that? It's Iranian assets that you've stolen. They're thieves. So Iranians, their expectations are to remove sanctions so that Iran could sell its oil—not to the United States, but to other countries who want Iranian oil. These are outrageous expectations? To stop the genocide in Lebanon? Is that an outrageous expectation? These are normal expectations. But the West is such an abnormal part of the world that all of this is seen as demanding too much. Well, if they don't want to give it, then they can wait. And then we'll see what happens to their economies in the West and what happens to the U.S. economy.

But the Iranian people know that the Americans will try again to stir up unrest. They'll stir up tensions wherever they can. They'll support terrorists wherever they can. They will support separatists wherever they can. They will try to destroy the morale of the Iranian people. They'll try to destroy the Iranian economy. They're waging war on the Iranian people. They've been doing it for 47 years, and now we're at the height of the conflict between Iran and the empire. And Iran is

fighting on behalf of the entire Global South. Iran is fighting on behalf of the global majority. And again, people should read Alastair Crooke. And I think he's been on your show—his book **Resistance: The Essence of the Islamic Revolution**, I think.

And the book **Going to Tehran**. Everyone should read that book. They should have their friends read it. They'll understand that this is the mentality of Iran, that they are resisting on behalf of the global majority. It's been like this for decades. On behalf of the global majority, resisting is an honor for the Iranian people because of their religious culture—the culture of Ashura, of Imam Hussain, Karbala, his sister Zainab, their struggle against the oppressors—and that historical moment resonates deeply in Iranian religious and national culture. And the same is true in Lebanon, and the same is true in Yemen, and all those who support the Palestinian people who belong to the axis of resistance.

So we're going to definitely see tough days ahead. They're waging war against the Iranian people, and they will do whatever they can to undermine the country. But Iran will persevere, and the United States will fail. And ultimately, there will be peace in Lebanon, and the regime will have to back down. And the world has turned against Zionism. The Israeli regime will no longer be able... This is, in my opinion, this was their last chance through genocide and ethnic cleansing to take over West Asia. And the entire West Asia was too cowardly to do anything about it. Some, you know, made noise like Erdogan, but he was never serious. And his people are not serious. They're allies of Trump.

They'll never take a step for the Palestinian people. And his allies will try to use sectarianism in order to deflect attention away from reality, as they've been doing in Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the Emirates, Jordan, and Egypt for decades. They put out disinformation about Iran and the axis of resistance. Why? To deflect. To deflect. It's all been about deflection. But this was the last chance for the empire to take West Asia, and the axis of resistance blocked it. And they will be defeated. And people are waking up—people across the world. In the United States, I just heard hours ago that a large segment of the Jewish community in the United States is turning against the Israeli regime.

And roughly half of them have turned—of the youth, I think up to the age of 35—have turned against Zionism. Look at all the propaganda that we've seen in the United States. And then double that, triple that for the Jewish community. But young Jews, they see right through that propaganda. So the Zionist regime is facing a battle that it cannot win. Jews, Christians, Muslims, Hindus, everyone, from all walks of life, from all segments of different societies, they've turned against the regime. And so this was its last chance. It will continue to brutalize and murder and slaughter. The genocide will go on, but the empire will fail.

#Mudiar

Not many people would have believed earlier that Iran could spearhead the struggle to topple two great evil forces of not just our times, but all times—the American empire and the empire of

neoliberalism—and both will unravel together. Professor Marandi, this was great talking to you, and thank you so much for your time. Stay safe.

#Marandi

Thank you very much for having me. It was an honor.

#Ayushman

Hi, my name is Ayushman. I, along with Jyotishman, have started this platform. Over the last two years, we have tried to build content for the left and progressive forces. We have interviewed economists, historians, political commentators, and activists so far. If you have liked our content and want us to build an archive for the left, I have two requests for you. Please do consider donating for the cause—the link is in the description below. Also, if you are not able to do so, don't feel sad. You can always like our videos and share them with your comrades. Finally, don't forget to hit the subscribe button.