

# Patrick Henningsen: Israel's Plot FAILS – Iran and US Advance MoU

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## #Nima

Hi everybody, today is Tuesday, May 16th, 2026, and our dear friend, our brother Patrick Henningsen, is here with us. Welcome back, Patrick.

## #Patrick

Great to be with you, Nima.

## #Nima

So let's start, Patrick, with what was reported. We have the latest report on Axios that Iran is not honest in the way they're negotiating with the United States regarding the nuclear program. They say something to officials in the United States behind the scenes, but they're doing something else. This report cited the head of the CIA, John Ratcliffe. Then later on, we had Israel Hayom reporting that Donald Trump is considering dismissing several senior officials who opposed the Iran deal, including Secretary of War Pete Haxett and CIA Director John Ratcliffe. And in this new report, it says a senior U.S. official was quoted as saying the argument has been settled. Those who oppose it may pay a personal price.

And he says that the Secretary of State, Marco Rubio, is not currently believed to be at risk because he has been careful not to publicly criticize the agreement. This is the situation with Donald Trump on one side. And as we know, the main problem exists in Lebanon. You've talked with everybody in Iran, in Lebanon, in the axis of resistance. The main issue is Lebanon right now, not anything else. And when Israel is going to, we had moments ago before coming to this live, I think an hour ago, we had the Iranian foreign minister saying that without Lebanon, there would be no agreement. And withdrawal from Lebanon is one of the most important points. Israel has to withdraw from Lebanon.

And we know in the aftermath of the announcement of the MOU, people are getting back to their homes in the southern part of Lebanon, and they're feeling the Israelis are still there. Some sort of fights are happening, little fights between the two sides. And this is the whole issue, right? Today,

Donald Trump had a meeting with the head of Qatar, the Qatari emir, in which he said that without Donald Trump, there would be no Israel on this planet, and someone would, you know, this sort of argument that he's making, that without Donald Trump, Israel would have been destroyed totally, and because of him, Israel exists today, and these sorts of arguments on his part. But when it comes to what's going on in the Trump administration, do you think what was reported in Israeli media is serious?

## **#Patrick**

I'm not sure, Nima. You know, the last 72 hours, I try not to watch the tennis match too much.

## **#Nima**

By the way, the other point is that Israel was asking the U.S. over and over to have some sort of understanding of the memorandum, the MOU. They wanted to know what's in it. So far, they were rejected, based on Channel 12 of Israel.

## **#Patrick**

Yeah, they've been kept in the dark. And all of Israel's proxies in the U.S. media, like Mark Levin, are hyperventilating. You know, like someone needs to hand him a paper bag. He's in danger. They say, I can't believe this, this is unacceptable. We can't see the terms of the deal. So that's why Israel wants to merge their intelligence with the U.S., so that they can not only have access to everything but also be involved in controlling it. They already have enough influence and control from John Ratcliffe and others that are basically Israeli proxies embedded in major U.S. agencies. These are people wholly loyal to the state of Israel.

But besides that, you watch the tennis match go back and forth, and you can get dizzy watching this if you follow it hour by hour. But if you just take a step back and look at the fundamentals here, the fundamentals are very simple. Unless Israel is prepared to withdraw from Lebanon—and I don't believe they'll do that of their own volition—they have to be threatened. The only credible deterrence for Israel withdrawing from South Lebanon is, you could say, if the skirmishes with Hezbollah went on long enough and Israel lost enough men—let's say they lost maybe five or six hundred over the next eight to twelve months—then, you know, there might be some political pressure back in Tel Aviv to say, "Look, that's enough."

We've done enough here. Uh, and then they could pull back. But that's no guarantee they're not going to return in the future, because they're back again. They've already occupied South Lebanon twice before, and they've returned now for a third go. So that's the problem with that. So if the U.S. threatens them, threatens to withhold arms to Israel, do you really think that any U.S. president,

with the amount of control the lobby has over Congress and the Senate and the press, do you really think even Trump, even Superman, could come down and sit behind that desk and then deny Israel arms and military support?

It's quite frankly impossible. That's my opinion. Trump is not brave enough to do that. I mean, I can't imagine the pressure that he would be under. I mean, it was insane. Look at the pressure he's under already with just putting a memorandum of understanding on the table. So to me, that's not going to happen. So if that's a deal breaker, then this MOU—and it's important. I've been watching tons of podcasts the last three days and mainstream media reporting, and everybody's saying there's a peace agreement. There is no peace agreement. This is an MOU. Basically, this is an agreement to negotiate over the next 18 to 24 months.

And there are many different phases within that time frame of two years, and many different milestones that you need to reach to go to the next one. So I'm looking at that and I'm thinking there are so many points of failure potentially, because the terms that the U.S. is interpreting and wanting versus what Iran has presented are very divergent. So to me, at this moment in time—maybe this could change in the future with more talks—but this can't happen. There can't be a peace agreement based on the divergence of the two parties. And the other problem is, it's not—this is the problem, Nima, with this whole conversation—is that the media and everybody is saying this is a U.S.-Iranian deal.

This is not. This is the U.S. and Israel. Israel is quietly behind the U.S. They're part of this. They're an absolute party to the conflict. They started the war in the first place. And Iran. So it's not fair to Iran to allow Israel to be an invisible partner in this negotiation or, quote, deal. It's deceptive, and it allows Israel so much latitude to act independently. And they can choose and reserve the right to undermine, to sabotage anywhere along the line. Let's just look at Israel's record for a moment. Let's take the Oslo Peace Accords, peace process as an example. How long was that strung out for, 12 years, 10 or 12 years? And Israel sabotaged that at every single key moment.

And they did that by moving the goalposts and violating expectations, and then using the media and all these political operatives they have, and proxies in Washington, to reframe it that the Palestinians have done something bad here, and we had to do this for our security. And oh, by the way, we're building 600,000 settlements, and by the way, the territory you thought you had back in 1990, that's not there anymore. So, you know, we were negotiating about a full pizza, but here we are 10 years later and you've only got a slice left. Sorry about that. And if you reject the deal, then it's your fault. The Palestinians rejected a perfectly good deal.

And that's exactly what Israel and the U.S. are going to try to do — maneuver Iran into a position where they start eating the pizza, and then over time, kicking the can down the road, and then blaming the Iranians. I'm telling you right now, I know the United States very well. What they're doing in this deal is they may appear to be moving in some kind of positive direction now, and they may even get to the point of signing an agreement in six months or a year, but nine out of ten

times, the U.S. will then change their position and do something that would violate the terms of the deal and then blame Iran for retaliating or for violating, and not blame themselves. And it's even more dangerous because Israel can do the job of sabotaging it.

And the United States can say, we tried, but you know, we have no control. That's Bibi. You know, that's why all this sort of WWF WrestleMania between Trump and Bibi, to me, is just absolute meaningless theater, and it's designed to misdirect people into that sort of political drama as a sideshow, when in fact the two countries are completely integrated, completely enmeshed, and the United States has no interest. Their stated policy is regime change in Tehran, and it's the disarmament and the evisceration of Hezbollah. That is the U.S. policy. And so if that's Israel's policy as well, and that's the U.S.'s policy, the U.S. will say to the Iranians, you have to renounce ever wanting to pursue a nuclear weapon.

Everyone's tweeting right now, Fox and J.D. Vance, and saying, Iran has agreed to not pursue a nuclear weapon. What does that mean? They're not pursuing one. So that's a straw man argument, but they're hanging everything around that in America to try to sell it like this is some high-level nuclear negotiation, and it's not. Iran's not developing a nuclear weapon. They haven't been developing a nuclear weapon. There's no evidence they're developing a nuclear weapon. But by hanging it on that big sort of marquee, high-profile, high-value issue, it justifies all of the sort of, let's say, problems and mistakes that the United States has made and gives the impression like they're really playing for the big sort of prize up there, which is Iran can't have a nuclear weapon, when in reality it's not about that.

It's about all these other very smaller issues, relatively smaller issues like Lebanon, which is actually fundamental in all of this because they can't, for many reasons. You know, Iran's not going to allow that because ultimately that's going to end up causing—Syria will soon be involved. And then when Syria's involved, then it's a problem for Iran. Then it's a problem for the region. And so Israel cannot be allowed to attack Syria and bomb and kill everybody in their radius with impunity.

It just can't happen because that's exactly what they've done to Iran. So Iran knows the source of the problems in the region is Israel. It's not us, it's Israel. And we're not going to allow Israel to gain leverage over us and everyone else and our allies in the region by killing Lebanese and Palestinians in Gaza. And Israel, guess what? They've been doing that all the time. They're cutting off aid to Gaza after an Iranian missile strike. They're using these people they're killing and starving and blockading as leverage. That's why Iran has moved to this higher level strategically of negotiations and putting Lebanon first, and they could very easily put Gaza right there, and that would really put Israel in a bind. And this will only work under threat of deterrence. And that's it.

Because Nima, in international relations, which you're very familiar with, you have a term called normative power. And a normative power is a country that has established itself, is credible in the international system, so much so that they can dictate policies based on human rights, morals, and ethics. Okay? Rule sets. But you can be a normative power. But to be a superpower, you have to be

a normative power who can then back up that policy enforcement with military force, hard force. That makes you a superpower. What is Iran doing right now? Exactly that. So just by definition of the exchange of what we've seen unfold over the last couple of weeks, it makes, de facto, Iran a world— they're behaving like a world superpower.

They may not be economically a global superpower, but I would say regionally, they absolutely are a regional superpower. And I would even argue that they've put themselves in the lead position of superpower in the region, not because they have a bigger army than Turkey, not because they have a bigger air force than Turkey, or not because they have a bigger air force than Israel, or even Saudi Arabia in some cases has much bigger conventional forces in certain areas than Iran has. That's not what makes you a superpower. What makes you a superpower is that you are a normative power, you're predictable, you're rational, and you back it up with hard power. And only Iran is the only country in the region that's doing that.

And Hezbollah is doing the same thing. Hezbollah attacked North Israel after October 7th for the express reason Hassan Nasrallah said. Drawing Israeli forces away from Gaza to save lives, to at least temporarily stop the genocide. Hezbollah sacrificed themselves for that, and it was in their interest. It's in Lebanon's interest in many ways to do this as well because this is a regional threat, a regional problem. As we can see, by allowing Israel to act and carry out a genocide in Gaza, and the world sat back and did nothing, they endorsed this genocide, and that gave Israel the green light to do it again in South Lebanon. Hezbollah knew this. That's why Hassan Nasrallah did what he did.

But Israel took that over-the-top reaction and used that as a license to just completely pulverize villages, towns, and cities in Lebanon. And again, the world community is sitting back and it's just, do we oppose this or not? What should we do? Maybe we'll sanction them. We're not sure. It's Israel. So we've got to be careful not to, you know, criticize Israel because, you know, that could be, you know, a problem, whatever. But that's—so Hezbollah, as a semi-state actor, has shown normative traits as an organization, and they're completely betrayed by the government in Beirut, who are absolute stooges, puppets of Saudi Arabia, the United States, and behind the scenes, really, Israel.

And that's a shame. That's very sad for Lebanon. But I think they're changing their position as well. They've come under a lot of pressure in the last week. And why? Why is the Lebanese government under pressure? Why did Joseph Aoun change his position? After the interview with Christiane Amanpour, you remember it was a disaster for Joseph Aoun. Why? The pressure came. Where is that pressure coming from, Nima? That pressure is coming from the actions of Iran. And if Iran stays, as I said to you in our previous conversation, if Iran just sticks to their principles—do not budge on principle. Do not budge.

Then eventually the world will conform to that reality that Iran is not moving, and they have to blame somebody, though, for this conflict, and they start blaming Israel. And guess what's happening? People are now stepping up. European countries are filing sanctions against Israel. Why?

It's purely for one reason, Nima. It's because Iran was steadfast. That's it. And Iran is a normative power, willing to back it up—a regional superpower by definition. In international relations textbooks, you can absolutely make this statement, and it is absolutely true by definition. They've ticked all the boxes for that. That means they're able to influence outcomes. What are we watching right now? Exactly that.

## **#Nima**

Here is what the Iranian foreign minister said concerning the MOU. From our perspective, there are two sides in this MOU. One side is the United States and Israel. On the other side, there is Iran and Hezbollah. He's not mentioning Lebanon. It's Iran and Hezbollah. Remember, the government in Lebanon is not at war with Israel. The war is happening between Israel and Hezbollah because Hezbollah is defending Lebanon.

## **#Patrick**

Actually, continue where you left off, Nima. Don't forget. But Lebanon has been officially at war with Israel for 75 years. That's official. No diplomatic relations. So technically, according to international law, Lebanon has been and is at war with Israel. That hasn't been resolved yet. That goes right back to 1948. So that's the technicality, and that's why they have provisions in their constitution that they can't meet with Israeli heads of state. Israel can't come into Lebanon, Israeli companies can't come in, and IDF soldiers can't enter the country.

And all of those have been broken by this government. They've allowed all sorts of people, including U.S. envoys that have served in the IDF—Amos Hochstein, former IDF soldier—swanning around Beirut, illegal. And Morgan Ortagus, the U.S. Tom Barrack's sidekick, she was wearing a Star of David in meetings and publicly in Beirut. That was a power move, basically by the Israel lobby saying, we're here, and you're going to do what we say. And so, yeah, anyway, continue what you were going to say.

## **#Nima**

And it continues: an end to the war in Lebanon is an inseparable part of the complete end of the war in the region, and a complete end to the war includes a withdrawal of all the forces from the occupied areas. Without the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the land it occupied during this war, it won't be considered a complete end to the war. Any military attack by Israel against Lebanon from now on, or the continuation of Israeli occupation inside Lebanon, will definitely be considered a violation of the MOU. I don't know what else they can put out. It's totally obvious what the Iranian position is when it comes to Lebanon. And today, in the meeting Donald Trump had with the Qatari emir, he said that Israel cannot do the job when it comes to Lebanon. Maybe we have to use Syria. So Israel has to back down, Syria comes in, and the whole agenda again, the same.

## **#Patrick**

No, no, that's a violent civil war in Lebanon. So they're saying we're going to send al-Qaeda into Lebanon, and that's going to kick off a sectarian bloodbath. They're guaranteed. And then Israel will use that sectarian bloodbath to move in even further and occupy and take and seize all the land below the Litani River. But don't believe the Israelis that they will stop at the Litani River, because they will then require a buffer zone above the Litani River and all the way up into the Shuf, and then the Beqaa Valley after that. And then they'll want the offshore water, everything offshore along that line, and they will keep that.

They're not going to give it back because that's where all the rich gas deposits are, you see. That's a lot of what this is actually about for Israel. It's freshwater, fertile, very profitable agricultural land in South Lebanon, as well as their strategic objectives and the offshore resources. That's the long-term benefit for expanding Israel. So, I mean, they've done it before, so why would you think they wouldn't do this again? So that's the other thing. But if they keep framing this as Hezbollah versus Trump, Israel, this is the problem, Nima. Because Hezbollah is part of Lebanon. They have half the parliament as the Hezbollah party. But the West and Israel, by doing this, they can isolate Hezbollah.

## **#Nima**

Because my understanding, Patrick—sorry for interrupting you—the reason that the foreign minister of Iran mentioned Hezbollah instead of Lebanon is that the government in Lebanon is not serving the people. They're pursuing the Israeli-American agenda. That's why when you say the government—and the war, by the way, is not happening between Israel and the government in Lebanon—it's between Israel and Hezbollah. And whenever they're talking about negotiations or any sort of talks, Hezbollah is not part of it. And the agreements they've made so far, it's all about the two parties. One of them is not at all in the fight.

## **#Patrick**

That's it. You've nailed it. That's the source of the problem. This is framed incorrectly. And because it's framed incorrectly, it allows so much leeway for all sorts of foreign interference, sabotage, division. If Lebanon, if the government had solidarity, if the country was united, if the Arabs in Lebanon were united and treated Hezbollah as what they actually are, which is a South Lebanese militia, a very well-regulated and effective militia defending their southern border—because the Lebanese armed forces will not do that and cannot do that, because they don't have the men, the equipment, or quite frankly, they don't want to engage with the IDF. And that's why, Nima, back at the end of the Lebanese Civil War—you remember back in 1991? Yes, before Rafik Hariri became prime minister—all the different factions had to disarm, but they allowed one faction to keep their arms, didn't they?

And guess what faction that was? Hezbollah. Why? Because they needed somebody to defend the southern border. And that's why. So there's history and precedent to Hezbollah and their role. And the reason the Lebanese armed forces—I've said this before many times, I'm not sure to you—is because America will not allow the Lebanese armed forces to have any equipment. They forbid them to have air defense. They can't have aircraft. Can you imagine this? What kind of an army are you? You're not allowed to have fighter jets. You're not allowed to have anti-aircraft. You're not allowed to protect your airspace. What are you? You're a gendarmerie. You're just a jumped-up domestic security force. That's what they are.

And that's because the U.S. micromanages and has total control over that. Why does the U.S. do that? Because that particular policy vis-à-vis Lebanon is absolutely controlled by the Israel lobby and Netanyahu's office. So that's how far this Israeli influence stretches, all the way to Washington and back to Beirut. Do people understand this? If people understand this, all of this that we're talking about makes perfect sense. And that's why it should be Lebanon, a united Lebanon, negotiating with Israel and the U.S. That's a totally different story. If Lebanon could unite and hold to principles of international law, which Hezbollah is adhering to—Hezbollah, by international law standards, has a very, very clean record compared to the Israelis.

So if that's the case, then the reason allies cannot come to support other allies—Lebanon has many allies, Nima, many allies. There's a lot of countries that have a lot invested in Lebanon: the French, the Italians, the Germans, a lot of European countries. The EU spends a lot of money in Lebanon. There are thousands and thousands of NGOs—I don't know how many, 20,000 NGOs in Lebanon. Most NGOs of anywhere on the planet, okay? The reason they're not getting the direct support against Israel is because they're not united. If they're united, then that frees up and allows other people to come in and support them and pressure Israel.

But because they're divided and so divisive, and the United States has got such a free hand to manipulate everything, that's why external countries can't come in and build a wall of solidarity against Israel. And that's by design. That's the whole point of all U.S.-Lebanese relations: divide and rule. Keep them weak. Keep them off balance. Keep their economy teetering on the edge of disaster. All of that. That's an absolutely intentional policy. Get them totally dependent on developmental loans from the U.N., the IMF, the U.S. government, USAID money. Like, that's what the NGO money is, that's what they live on there. They become so dependent that they develop Stockholm syndrome from their controller.

Yes, yes, America. Meanwhile, their country is disintegrating because of this. So, you know, if the president is a president for all Lebanese, then he's doing his job. If he's not, then he should step down, quite frankly, because he's not doing his job. Or he needs to be removed from office in the nicest possible way. But it's not real leadership there, because they have a confessionalist system

that is so outdated, it's archaic—the Maronite Christian president, the Sunni prime minister, and the Hezbollah Speaker of the House, based on a census from 1958. Hello? What would today's census be?

President would be Shiite Hezbollah Party, prime minister would be Sunni, and the speaker of the parliament would be Maronite Christian, end of story. But they should just get away with the whole confessional system, because this is the same problem, Nima, that this is why Iraq is a basket case—because the Americans, the British, and the Americans afterwards always wanted to have a minority in charge of a majority. And look what it led to. And then they're kicking up and screaming in Washington after the fall of Saddam Hussein that Maliki or some other Shiite leader emerges and is prime minister and so forth. And they're just like, oh, the Shiites are in charge in Iraq, they're the majority, that's not right. That was the problem, and it's by design. Same thing in Lebanon. So look, those are the fundamentals, as I see it, of the problem there. That means that if this can't be resolved politically, it's going to get resolved on the battlefield. And that's—unfortunately for the peace agreement—that's the problem.

## **#Nima**

I think the problem for Donald Trump is somehow, Patrick, the GCC countries as well, because he wants to get back on track with producing oil and gas. And we've learned just moments ago, there is a report that the Qatari government—Bloomberg reported—that in two months they're going to return to the way it was before in production of LNG and exporting that. That is hugely important for Donald Trump, the way that he wants to balance the market, because there is some sort of global pressure on his administration. On the other hand, they see how Israel is pushing this war. Because, to be honest, I don't see Israel being capable of attacking Iran in a significant manner without the help of the United States.

This is the moment that the United States could have some sort of leverage. I don't know if they're going to use it. I don't know if these reports on Israel Hayom or Channel 12 are right, or maybe—because we've seen, as you remember, how all this madness has happened. We had those people who were against war—Tulsi Gabbard, other people within the administration—they were basically removed from the scene, and right now they're not part of the administration. But the people who were totally supporting the war, like the CIA director, like Pete Hegseth, like Stephen Miller, Jared Kushner—maybe these are the people who are running the establishment, who are running the Trump administration.

Right now, there are these sorts of signs coming from the Israeli media that Donald Trump is reconsidering or reassessing his moves, his strategy. Do you think—and we've seen how the vice president, J.D. Vance, is coming to the scene again—in the last two days, he's done more than four or five interviews about what is the MOU, what is the plan, and he's given us a very delusional,

optimistic sort of view that it's going to be amazing, we're going to come together, Iran's going to be able... The same argument he had before the war started. You remember what was happening before the war started. It's selling this sort of, I think, delusional thinking.

But when it comes to the reality, coming back to the reality of what has happened so far in the Middle East, if something happens, they can get back to the same sort of conditions during the war. No straight-up or most, no LNG. They could destroy the rest of the LNG. It was destroyed—17% of Qatari LNG capacity or production—and they're going to get back. It's reversible. It's not going to be something that they can improve, and they cannot get back to the same sort of disastrous situations they were in. This is the problem that Donald Trump is facing, and there is no military solution for that. There has to be some sort of political move. What is that? And how do you see the pressure that GCC countries are bringing to the table?

Because their economy has been hit so hard by the war. And right now they're getting back. The Strait is not open, as we've learned. The blockade is over in the Persian Gulf, but the Iranian sort of control over the Strait of Hormuz is happening as we speak. And they're controlling everything. Let's see what will happen in the next 60 days. It seems that Iran has accepted the passage of the tankers without, you know, without any sort of fee or any sort of toll for 60 days. And later on, it has some sort of new mechanism for the Strait together with the Omani government. This is what we've learned so far from the deal, the MOU. Nobody knows what's in it, as Israel is so desperate to understand what's in it. Go ahead, you're taking that.

## **#Patrick**

Well, quite a few things you mentioned there that need to be addressed. The first thing is, let's be clear, the American public doesn't care about GCC countries. They only care about it as far as anybody that does business in the Emirates, lives in Bahrain, people who are in the military. It's a nice assignment. It was before, it's not anymore. Or Americans that work in Kuwait, have nice high-paying jobs, don't pay tax, all that stuff. They're working in the GCC. But in terms of the people living there as countries, as entities, Americans don't care. They only care about it in the sense of what they produce and put into the global energy market. So that's the extent.

So when you see concern or, you know, talking about our partners in the Gulf, or Trump's only concerned about how much money they can pry off them, or how much money Jared Kushner can pry off the Saudis to pad his Affinity investment fund, or how many of them will pay for Donald Trump's golf courses or, you know, DAMAC high-rise apartment buildings and whatnot in Dubai or whatever, that's the extent of their concern. So if people in the GCC really understand this—and they should—maybe they're coming to that understanding that they have two choices. If they keep hitching their wagon to Uncle Sam's cavalcade or Israel through the Abraham Accords normalization, that's a suicide pact. And they're making the exact same stupid decision that Germany made, which is ultimately a suicide pact for your economy and the future of your country.

Germany has hitched itself to NATO and to the U.S. vis-à-vis Ukraine and their relationship with Russia. It's very clear after the sabotage of the Nord Stream pipeline, Germany had a choice. They looked West, and the rest is history. They're toast. It's the worst decision ever. The GCC, if they turn towards Iran and make a security pact that's by the region and for the region, then they have a chance to prosper and, I think, be on much stronger footing going forward. Good for everybody. Good for everybody. Probably make a lot of money and have security, okay? But are they going to do that?

That's the question. Can they do that? So that's the problem there for the GCC. The next thing is, this basically has to be framed as a surrender. Because Iran—listen, Nima—do you remember back in April? Remember April 8th, the ceasefire? Who was asking for the ceasefire then? I can't remember. Was it America? I think it was America. Was Israel desperate for a ceasefire? Oh, yeah. Was Iran asking for a ceasefire on April 8th? I can't remember the Iranians asking for that. So that's the first thing. That was a sort of pre-surrender. And then here we are, six, eight weeks later, something like that.

Who's begging for a deal? It's not the Iranians. They already issued a statement: we're done with negotiations. We're going to have a two-track. We'll leave the door open, but we're pursuing our security objectives. We're going to defend ourselves, and we're going to hit back if necessary. Very clear. But it was America. It was Trump. The United States was desperate, desperate for a ceasefire. So Iran issues terms. Technically, that's surrender terms. And guess what happened this week? Well, at least in the MOU, the U.S. accepted the surrender terms. So in every single definition of warfare, the U.S. has just surrendered to Iran.

It's 100% clear. And you know what else is interesting about this, Nima? This didn't have to happen this week, but you have to ask yourself why it happened this week. Why didn't it happen last week? Why is it not happening next week or next month? One of the main reasons is very short-term political pressure on Donald Trump. And Israel knows every move, okay? Israel knew that Trump was desperate, at his birthday on the White House lawn, to have the headlines and the announcement and to go in there as a victor—that he brought peace and that he's got a peace deal. It was a huge media event. And then the next day was another big media event.

He was going to the G7 in France, the G7 in Paris. And he was not going to enter that without something in hand, a win in hand. And that's why they pushed hard. And that's why they were rushing to do that. And Israel played the U.S. like a fiddle. Netanyahu knew that. And they said, this is our chance to hit Beirut, kill a major Hezbollah commander. And we know that the Iranians can't hit back, because if they hit back, it's going to break and ruin Trump's peace deal. So Israel said, this is a chance for us to strike hard and in positions we wanted to get for a while in Lebanon without having to pay any military price from an Iranian retaliation. They knew. They knew.

And then Kushner was on the phone offering the Iranians cash not to strike Israel, and Iran said, no, we don't want your money, that's our money. Israel was trying to pay Iran not to retaliate against

Israel, and Iran said, well, that's our money anyway. Are you going to give us an advance on our own money? No, sorry, this is important, this is out of principle. And so you can see behind the scenes there's all this going on this week. So short-term, a lot of political pressure on Trump to get a win. So that's a lot of U.S. domestic politics influencing international politics in that sense. And Israel is very cleverly playing that strategically for a short-term gain.

And they did. And they did. And Israel believes that they can undo this. They can undo this MOU. They can undo any agreement. They have many opportunities, many different tools at their disposal to do that. And just quickly, Tulsi Gabbard was not against the war. This is a myth that is being talked about. J.D. Vance was not against the war. This is a myth. If they were truly against the war, they would have publicly stated that at some point. They had many opportunities to state that, to resign out of principle, or at least to offer a countervailing opinion. Certainly, Gabbard can just resign. As vice president, it's a little more complicated. He can't be sacked by Trump.

So he could speak freely if he chose to. It would probably be good for his career, but he chose not to. So Tulsi Gabbard didn't object. And before she came into the Trump administration, she was very hawkish against Iran, and she was promoting sectarian division. She said Sunni versus Shiite, and these people are all terrorists. She used to go on Fox openly, you know, and say this sort of thing. She's very hawkish, actually. She used to be against a war with Iran when she was running for president, but she changed completely. She used to sell—Tulsi Gabbard used to sell—shirts that said "Don't Bomb Iran" in 2018. They're still on Amazon. Now, she never opposed the war.

And so that's just—I'm sorry—it's not credible. Vance, what they do is they put rumors through the media and through allies and proxies saying that J.D. Vance is opposed to Trump's wars and he's the good guy behind the scenes trying to keep Trump straight. This is absolute political theater. I can't tell by anything Vance has said anywhere along this whole crisis that is, well, coherent, but it seems to be against the war. No, he's absolutely behind Trump. And then Vance goes—I don't know if you have any of these interview clips of Vance in the last couple of days. I don't know if you have any of those. I think CBS News. Do you have any of those, Nima?

## **#Nima**

Yeah, I have.

## **#Patrick**

Do you have the one on CBS News where he said the Gulf Coast Coalition? He said it twice—the Gulf Coast Coalition. It was with a yellow background, just in the last day. And I'm thinking to myself, the Gulf Coast Coalition? The Gulf Coast? The Gulf Coast? So that's the one in the Gulf of Mexico. So who's the Gulf Coast Coalition? Is that Mexico, Belize, Costa Rica, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Florida? Who's in that coalition? No, that's not the GCC coalition. It's not the Gulf Cooperation Council. What is he talking about? He's the vice president. He didn't just say that once; he repeated

that in multiple interviews yesterday. So this guy doesn't know anything. He doesn't know geography. He doesn't know what he's talking about.

He's being fed talking points. He's absolutely vacant on this issue. He doesn't know what he's talking about. He's there to deliver talking points. He is not chief executive material. He's 41 years old. He has no experience in politics, zero in international politics. That, to me, is dangerous because if he becomes president, he is an absolute finger puppet for the Israeli lobby, Peter Thiel, and Wall Street. That's why J.D. Vance, in so many ways—the only way I can rightly describe him is the white Obama. He's a completely vacant, hollow, great talker. But I think Obama was actually smarter and, well, better schooled on geography than J.D. Vance. But that's a—I don't know if you have that.

## **#Nima**

Here is what he said. Here's what he said.

## **#Speaker 03**

are open to the Gulf Coast countries investing in the reconstruction of Iran, but only if Iran ends their nuclear program, ends their enriched stockpile of material, and is really open to an inspection and enforcement regime that gives the American people confidence they're never going to have a nuclear weapon. So I think the dance you're going to see, Ed, which is... Yeah.

## **#Patrick**

He didn't say it in that clip, but there's a couple of them out there. But do you see how he's leaning heavily on this nuclear weapons thing? That's basically a straw man. That's designed to absolve the U.S. of guilt for every bit of this disaster that they've taken part in and done. It's to say that this is so important. This is about nuclear non-proliferation. It wasn't. It wasn't. And that's why they keep hammering it away. You know, I don't have any confidence in any deal, which isn't really a term legally in international relations. There are agreements, there are accords, there are treaties. There's no such thing as a deal. A deal is just so vague, and that's why Trump uses this term on everything, because you don't have to ever define anything, and you can change all the moving parts as you wish along the way, and that's why Trump talks like this.

And the problem is they can't be honest about what they've done. And they can't admit that they've lied about Iran's nuclear weapons program. They can't. Because if they do, that sort of delegitimizes them on every level. So they won't do that. So they double down. And that's why if you're not honest about the root causes of the conflict, then you can never—there's no way in any universe, Nima, in history—and J.D. Vance was lecturing us two days ago, three days ago, saying that at the end of every war, there are negotiations. How did World War II end with negotiations? How can you be so ignorant of history? Even I learned at 13 years old in eighth grade world history that wars end when one party has to surrender and accept terms of surrender.

That's how World War II ended. That's how every war ends. But J.D. Vance doesn't know anything about history, can't grasp these basic concepts. So to me, he's a massive liability in any position of power. He's just an errand boy, again delivering talking points. But that's the problem, because you can't put a treaty together on paper and have international guarantors if both parties can't agree on what caused the war to begin with. That's included in that document. That's included. So if the U.S. is unwilling to do that, then there can be no agreement. There can be no binding peace treaty at the end of this. It's the same reason why they've dragged their heels and why Trump can't get a deal with Russia and Ukraine.

Because they will not. The Russians have said time and time again, we must address the root causes. And at least to say, at the point where the U.S. orchestrated a violent coup and a civil war in Maidan. And that started a series of events that led to an eight-year civil war, that led to massacres in the Donbass, that forced Russia to intervene after the collapse of U.N. Security Council Resolution 2202. And then, on February 24th, Russia mounted a humanitarian intervention, a responsibility-to-protect action, exactly the same way the U.S. has done many other times—illegitimately, in the case of the U.S. But Russia did, you know, according to U.S. doctrine, cut and dried. Cut and dried absolutely makes sense.

Russia warned everybody, if this Minsk Accord process fails, we will intervene. We will have no choice but to intervene to save the Russian, ethnic Russians, Russian speakers in eastern Ukraine. And the world said, don't worry, don't worry. We've got Germany and France on the job. They're going to guarantee this Minsk process. And, of course, we find out they admit after the fact—Merkel, Hollande, Zelensky, and Poroshenko all admitted they sandbagged it in order to give time to rearm Ukraine to fight Russia for the war that we see today. Okay, so that's not a mystery. But it's because the U.S. won't address any, or the Europeans won't address any, of those factual points on the timeline.

They're so divergent with Russia on the root causes that, because of their ego and because they don't want to lose face and they don't want to just basically surrender their positions as being totally illegitimate—and all their power along with it in the international community and their reputation—the Europeans and the U.S. won't do that. So there will be no peace treaty in Ukraine. It's impossible. You cannot have a bilateral or multilateral agreement without agreements on how you got there, what the terms are, and what you're going to be doing going forward. It all matters. What happened before matters with what you're going to do going forward. The same exact situation with Iran.

So the inability of the U.S., the pushing of all these propaganda talking points, all these tropes, all these lies—that's undermining the entire peace process. It comes with a heavy price. People think you can lie, and the U.S. can lie and do propaganda and change the reality and twist the story, and Israel can do this, and there's no cost to that, and all they have to do is just show up one day with a pretty good piece of paper and say, we got a deal, and we're stronger than the Iranians, so they'll

probably accept it, and we'll say we're going to lift sanctions. Not enough. You're not going to get a binding, lasting peace treaty. That's the problem, Nima.

It's a fundamental flaw that the U.S. cannot address because they're so dishonest, so corrupt, as are the Israelis. And they frame anybody that shoots back at them as a terrorist. And legally, they proscribe them as terrorists, every single group in the U.S. They tell all of their allies they have to. The Israeli lobby is enforcing that, by the way—the designation of terrorism. That's what the Israeli lobby spends a lot of time doing, lobbying to proscribe various resistance groups as terrorism. And then once that happens, there's no negotiations that are going to happen. You're sanctioning everybody. You can't talk. The counterparties can't come to Washington because they're sanctioned.

This is what happens with every single case—with Russia, with Iran, with Syria. And the reason is they don't want to have any negotiations. The U.S. and Israel don't want to have any settlement. They want war, and they want to destroy their enemy, crush any resistance, say they're all terrorists, and any civilians that die in the process, well, sorry, that's just collateral damage. This is a war on terror, and we're just hunting down the terrorists. We're sorry about the 100,000 dead civilians in Gaza or the thousands of dead in Lebanon. We're really sorry, but, you know, people die in war. That's what they're telling us these days. Oh, this is war. These things happen.

This isn't war. Lebanon's not having—they're not fighting a war with Israel. It's completely out of balance. Israel's attacking Lebanon. They're stealing their territory. They're stealing their land and resources. They're pulverizing 50,000 homes and dwellings—50,000 homes and dwellings. 1.2 million people internally displaced in Lebanon—1.2 million. That is not a war. That's just a massacre. That's just a sadistic massacre, and it fulfills the definition of genocide according to the International Genocide Conventions. So here we are. We've got another genocide, another genocide in South Lebanon. How much is too much for Israel? They've already done it in Gaza. Take a look at the hellscape. Now we see parts of South Lebanon.

It looks like Rafah. When is enough enough for the international community or the Arabs? But still, Saudi is trying to micromanage the government in Beirut, pumping cash in and still playing games. You know, there's two Middle Easts. You've got the Gulf oil states, and then you've got Arab nationalist countries. And the Gulf oil states are constantly manipulating and playing games with Arab nationalist countries. And quite frankly, their populations are either labor—the Gulf view them as potential labor, a source of human capital—or they covet their resources, or they just want to manipulate them along sectarian lines to advance some other ideological or religious agenda, or Wahhabi agenda, or whatever.

It's just, this is the problem with the region. Iran knows all of this. Iran understands all of this. And, you know, that's what makes it difficult. And the U.S. is very happy that that's happening because they see Hezbollah and Shiites in the region as an enemy, and they see Iran as an enemy, so does Israel. So, you know, until we see some fundamental change in the comments and an end to the dehumanization of Hezbollah and Shiite Muslims in the Levant, and the demonization of

Palestinians—be they even Christian or Muslim, it doesn't matter—they're dehumanized completely. The dehumanization of Iranians and calling Iran a terrorist state, saying they're the number one state sponsor of terror, when they're clearly not.

They're nothing. The United States is the world's number one state sponsor of terror, followed by Saudi Arabia and a whole plethora of Gulf states and a few other Western countries. But the problem is these lies really gum up the gears of international relations and diplomacy. These lies come at a cost, and we're witnessing that cost right now. It's because of these lies, because of these labels, not allowing anybody to resist the Israeli aggression or Israeli illegal occupation or Israeli land theft.

But anyone who fights back, hits them back, is a terrorist. Terrorist. Therefore, not worthy of living. It's as simple as that. That's the rule set that the U.S. and Israel have enforced in the region. But it is coming apart a little bit now, Nima. And the only reason it's coming apart and people are starting to see reality and talk about what I'm saying here—I'm hearing more of this conversation now happening in podcasts and in the media. People are asking questions like, this isn't right. This actually doesn't add up. We've been doing this all these years. And we're starting to hear that now. So I'm very hopeful that things are changing out there in the intelligentsia, in this political conversation, especially in the West.

But it can't happen soon enough because, you know, it's—the scenes in Lebanon—Nima, I really, I have so much love for Lebanon and the people there, all the people in Lebanon. I just, you know, it breaks my heart to see Israel bombing Tyre. You know, I've walked those streets. You know, I've worked in those places, in universities and colleges there, lectured, had good relations with students, walked in all those historic areas. And to say they're issuing evacuation orders to 25 villages and towns, saying, leave, we're going to pulverize you. What is this? In what universe is this legal or acceptable by anyone's standard? If the West, with all their high-minded values of democracy and this and that and international law, and they can't even manage to sanction Israel out of football or the Eurovision Song Contest, for that matter.

I mean, what do you want Israel to do? If they drop a nuclear bomb and kill 200,000 people, will they be banned? Then can we kick them out of the Eurovision Song Contest? Europeans are just ridiculous, just absolutely shameless. So anyway, until that external pressure builds, I don't see much change in the fundamentals of the situation. But likewise, what I said earlier stands, Nima, which is that Iran has to stand firm. If they stand firm on principle, don't move on principle, and also in accordance with international law, which they are, and international principles, and the UN Charter, et cetera, et cetera. They stand firm. Ultimately, they will win, and more allies will come to support them.

People who opposed them before will then support them, but only if they stand firm, because Israel just wants to break that consensus up. They want to cause division within Iran, create problems in the media. Oh, these people, the hardliners are against that. You hear all this stuff in the West. Pezeshkian is going to resign. Those are all like PR info attacks to try to create infighting within Iran.

And not only that, but to make other countries less confident to engage with Iran, giving the impression that they're just in disarray and chaos. And that's not true. There's tremendous cohesion and solidarity in Iran, more than ever before. And I would say if you want to do business with Iran, now is probably the best time to do business with Iran, because you do have that at least very strong consensus at the moment.

## **#Nima**

Yeah, exactly. Please go to, right below Patrick's name, you see 21st Century Wire, and you can go to [patrickhenningsen.substack.com](http://patrickhenningsen.substack.com). Here is the link: [patrickhenningsen.substack.com](http://patrickhenningsen.substack.com). And I'm gonna put all the links to Patrick's YouTube channel and Substack, all of the links, I'm gonna put them in the description of this video. You can go there, you can access, you can subscribe to his Substack, and you can subscribe to his YouTube channel. Thank you so much, Patrick, for being with us today. Great pleasure. My pleasure.

## **#Patrick**

Thank you for the invitation, Nima.