

Marandi: Iran-Oman Deal Almost Reached & Saudi-Turkey-Pakistan Defence Pact

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#Glenn

Welcome back. Seyed Mohammad Marandi joins us today, a professor from Tehran University and a former advisor to Iran's nuclear negotiation team. Thank you for taking the time on a Sunday morning to speak with me.

#Seyed M. Marandi

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

#Glenn

So we see a lot of things having happened over the past, well, 24-plus hours. That is, first, Iran attacked a ship in the Strait of Hormuz, which caused a lot of outrage, especially from the UAE. And we see also reports of the Iranians being more vocal on their demands against the United States. That is, they should pay compensation for what they have destroyed, remove the blockade on Iran. Beyond this, of course, we have all these other diplomatic developments as well. That is, the Saudi-Turkey-Pakistan defense pact. We have the Oman-Iran deal. We have the U.S.-Saudi nuclear deal. Well, not finalized, but finalized. What do you make of all these developments? Because things appear to be moving fast ahead. We can start with the new attacks in the Strait of Hormuz. How can we understand what is happening now?

#Seyed M. Marandi

It's just another normal day in West Asia. So the situation is unlike what the Americans want to believe. It's not good for the United States at all. And the Iranians are now showing that they're not going to allow oil or any other goods to be exported from the Persian Gulf region without Iran's

consent. And they've had a specific, it seems to me, project of targeting UAE ships. So they've struck at least, well, I don't know exactly how many now, but a number of UAE tankers over the past few days. And remember, a while back, Trump made that Truth Social threat where every time Iran strikes a ship, they'll destroy some Iranian critical infrastructure, bridge, or power plant. But Iran has been striking these tankers since then and blocking any sort of exports from even the Emirates, including from Fujairah, which is outside the Strait of Hormuz.

And we can see the same situation in the Red Sea. The Yemeni armed forces are blocking Saudi ships. This morning there was another strike on the Jazan refinery. The pressure is on. The pressure is continuing. And as time goes by, the global energy crisis is getting worse. And the Iranians know exactly what's going on. And it's not just the leaders. I mean, I rarely go on Iranian TV, but last night I went, and I began explaining my views on the region. And I thought I'd speak a bit about Japan, and then as soon as I said a couple of words, the host, you know, he interacted with me. It was clear he knew exactly what was going on, and the threat to the bond market in the United States. And this is how closely events in the United States, events in the West, are being followed. People know exactly what's going on in general terms, of course.

They know—a lot of people know as much as I do, if not more. So they know about the midterm elections. They know what's going on in the Democratic Party. They know what's going on in the Republican Party. They know what Tucker Carlson and his political allies are doing. So this shows how carefully monitored the situation is, politically. And I think that Iran's military and political actions are carried out with an eye on what's going on in the United States, internally but also internationally. So, yes, the Emirates are very upset, but there's nothing they can do about it. And there's nothing that the United States can do about it. The Saudis are very upset because now they are in the same boat as Qatar and the Emirates and Kuwait. They can't export much from the Red Sea.

They can't export from the Persian Gulf. And remember, you know better than I, of course, that these are countries that consume a lot. They are not like Iran, which has lived under maximum pressure sanctions and sanctions for decades. The consumer in Saudi Arabia is used to spending like there's no tomorrow, and across the Persian Gulf region. And that is going to have an added impact, in the sense that not only are the hopes of Trump to bring in trillions of dollars from the military dictators, family regimes in the Persian Gulf for the U.S. economy, but now it's going to be the opposite. These countries are going to have to withdraw money from the United States.

They're going to have to sell bonds in the U.S. market in order to sustain their economies, in order to sustain the country, in order to repair the damage that has been done and the ongoing damage that is being caused. And again, as I said before, the costs are enormous, especially for these societies, which are extremely wasteful and need huge quantities of money just to sustain themselves. So, from the way I see it, is that the Iranians are playing a waiting game. And they are going to put as much pressure on the other side as possible and try to tolerate the pain inflicted on Iran as much as possible, outwait the United States.

And based on past experiences since the war began, they have every right to be optimistic. The 40-day or 39-day war—I never figured out how long it was—was a massive failure for the United States. Not a single Iranian underground base was destroyed. Not a single underground Iranian base was damaged throughout the country. And some of those bases were never used and are still not being used. But it just shows how capable the Iranian armed forces are today, because the Iranians have been fighting a war for the 21st century against the Americans, who are fighting a 20th-century war.

U.S. bases, Israeli assets, assets of the regimes in the region that were assisting the United States, all of them were out in the open, while all key Iranian assets were deep underground, whether it's the factories, whether it's the missile bases, the drone bases, the bases that hold Iranian naval speedboats, the bases that protect Iran's air force, the bases that protect Iran's air defense systems, and other command and control bases, and bases alongside the Persian Gulf that were created in case the United States carries out a land invasion. All of these are protected while Iran goes one by one and destroys U.S. assets on the ground.

I think it's quite clear why the Iranians would have that patience. And then you see, in the siege warfare, the United States tried to strangle Iran. Ultimately, it was the United States that had to agree to the MOU. And now we saw the statement by the Iranian Supreme National Security Council, the chair of the Supreme National Security Council, reinforcing the MOU. But it's sort of an MOU plus. These are not new demands. Some people seem to think that these are new demands or excessive demands. No, they're not. They're maximizing the MOU. And as I said before to you on a number of occasions, for example, in Article One, when it speaks of Lebanon, it also speaks of the other fronts.

It doesn't name them, but in this statement, they're named: Palestine, Yemen, Iraq. These wars must come to an end. And of course, it means both Gaza and the West Bank. So the demands of the Iranians are not new demands, but they are saying we are not going to compromise on anything. When it comes to compensation, the Iranians demand full compensation. That is in the MOU. But the stress that is being put on these issues now is basically to send a message to the United States that not only are we not going to compromise on the MOU, we are going to maximize our demands within the framework of the MOU.

#Glenn

I always think that the U.S. lost something quite important in the war against Iran. That is, during the post-Cold War era of U.S. hegemony, the main perception of the United States, rooted in facts, I would say, was that it was all-powerful. There was a perception that you can't challenge the United States. It kept all countries at bay, and this was a huge resource for the U.S. But now, with every attack on Iran, you see the weapons stockpile driven down, which means whoever is the opponent

of the U.S. would have better cards to play. And also, I guess, the deterrence that is in the past, as Trump always screams out on Twitter, is that if anyone dares to attack the U.S., well, we're going to blow up your country and destroy your civilization tomorrow if you dare to retaliate.

But again, this pushback from Iran as well, we now see that, well, there's not much the U.S. can do, really, short of nuking Iran. But it is interesting what they gambled on this war. Again, it's not just the Strait of Hormuz; it's regional partnerships. But it does seem that the economy, though—I'm wondering what the economic ripple effects would be from this. Because in July, we see that the crude oil exported by Saudi Arabia to the U.S., it dropped to zero, we're told. I mean, it's hard to calculate the kind of economic and political repercussions this will have. Well, first of all, Saudi Arabia will be destabilized. It's, you know, energy, it's money inflow, but also where it invests money into the U.S. I mean, the U.S. needs this as well.

It's, you know, the tech industry, which the U.S. is in the AI race with the Chinese. It needs its funding, the petrodollar system. Everything comes under a massive squeeze. So it's... I think in the future this will be a key theme for academics to see exactly what the U.S. gambled and lost on this war. I did want to ask about this new defense pact, because we see Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Pakistan all form this defense pact. All of them, of course, they are more or less surrounding Iran. That being said, they have very different interests and very different motivations. I was wondering to what extent is Iran a target or the reasoning behind this? And to what extent should the Iranians worry, or how might they react? Sorry, big question.

#Seyed M. Marandi

No, no, no problem at all. Just before answering that, a couple of years ago, I don't know, maybe in one of our first discussions, I said that I always believed that the collapse of the Soviet Union and the victory of the United States over Saddam Hussein in Kuwait was the worst thing that could happen to the United States. And that is because it created an arrogance that basically led to the swift collapse of the U.S. empire. The ghosts of Vietnam were swept away after Iraq, and it was the unipolar moment. And then came the invasion of 9/11, which, when you look at the evidence being put forth by the likes of Tucker Carlson, it's obviously not just Al-Qaeda and those 19 people who were... It doesn't look like that at all.

It looks like it was much broader, and that agencies linked to the West or Western agencies were also involved. But in any case, since then, the United States has been rapidly declining. And this war is the exact opposite of what we saw in Kuwait. In Kuwait, there was a stunning victory, and now we see, just two decades later, plus, or three decades later, plus, you see the exact opposite: that the United States fought a battle, or fought a war, and it failed. In fact, the 40 days of fighting, or 39, 40 days of fighting, is similar to the time it took to defeat Saddam Hussein in Kuwait. I think that was 43 days or so. Maybe I'm mistaken. But I think that actually turned out to be horrible for the United States because the United States changed.

It became aggressive, extremely aggressive, and that destroyed it. And a lot of that destruction, again, has to do with Iran, because when the United States invaded Afghanistan and Iraq, Iran gradually began to work with the resistance. In Afghanistan, Iran began to work with the Taliban. I mean, the first generation of the Taliban, they were horrible, and they were carrying out mass murder and slaughter. But after they collapsed in Afghanistan, the second generation became more moderate. We still have big differences with Afghanistan: education, women's education, and women's rights. And that's a big divide. But the relationship has evolved tremendously. And Iran supported the Taliban to weaken the U.S. occupation.

And ironically, it has angered many people among the minorities, the Shia, the Tajik, the Persian language speakers, the Uzbeks, who are all opposed to the Taliban. But for Iran, the priority was to expel the empire. And the Iranians believe that if the empire is expelled, then the situation in Afghanistan will calm down because there's no foreign manipulator to turn community against one another, one nation against another. And the same was true in Syria. The Iranians supported the Syrian government to oppose the U.S. project and the Israeli project, which sadly regional regimes participated in. But the same model took place in Iraq. In Iraq and in Afghanistan, Iran pushed back. It was General Soleimani behind both.

And that led the United States to leave, and they had spent trillions of dollars. So then, to a large degree, the U.S. favoring Iran in this war is linked to the U.S. failure in Iraq and in Afghanistan. They had to move away from Iranian borders. They spent trillions of dollars, became much weaker. The American people became... the economy became weaker. The American people became much more skeptical about these forever wars. And so, if it wasn't for Iran supporting the resistance against the empire in Afghanistan, in Syria, and in Iraq, and Lebanon, and also in Yemen, then today it would have been a very different situation.

The Americans would have been able to come forward with much greater strength. And also, I would add, and I'm not saying that Iran foresaw all of this, but Iran's support for Russia during the war, because Iran saw the expansion of NATO as a threat to itself as well. It was not just Ukraine, but it was also Georgia. Of course, Armenia and Azerbaijan would be next. So we already had Turkey as a NATO member, and then these added to it would have made the threat even greater for Iran. So Iran's support for the Russians during the war also helped Russia destroy a lot of the assets that NATO gave to Ukraine and weakened NATO economically, militarily.

Many of those air defense systems that were used in Ukraine benefited Iran. And of course, right now, the war in West Asia helps Russia. When the United States is forced to spend money on multiple fronts and waste its assets on multiple fronts, it benefits Iran and Russia. But with regards to the three leaders gathering in Saudi Arabia—the Turkish leader, the Pakistani leader, and Mohammed bin Salman—I think it's pretty clear that this is about Yemen. It's about the weakening position of Saudi Arabia. These countries did not gather. They didn't gather over Lebanon. They didn't gather over the Israeli advances in Syria.

And they didn't gather over the horrific situation that's taking place in the West Bank. It is about Saudi Arabia being severely weakened because of its own policies. The Saudis helped the United States attack Iran. They conspired with the Americans against the Iranian people. They acted as the U.S. airbase, the country. Not only did they provide airspace, they provided airbases. Not only did they provide airbases, they provided jet fuel. They provided everything that the Americans needed. They paid for the U.S. war as well. So all of the expenditures of the United States and Saudi Arabia during this period were paid for by the Saudis and Qatar and the Emirates as well.

They paid for the U.S. presence. And that's true about Kuwait. So the expenditures on these bases, in these bases, were paid for by these governments. It was so much that some of them were facing financial difficulties as a result. So Saudi Arabia helped the United States against Iran. They were part of the war. And then they went and provoked Yemen. They bombed Yemen at a time when they had imposed a siege. And the siege on Yemen had been going on for years. And then they bombed, of course, Iraq, falsely blaming Iraq for drone strikes, which were carried out by Yemen. And Yemen again today has carried out further drone strikes. So it was basically for Saudi Arabia, nothing more.

They tried to give it a different spin, but that's what it was. But I don't think it really matters too much for the Iranians. I mean, just today we saw a Yemen strike—the Bazan refinery again—and they'll continue to do so. And I don't see these countries getting involved against Yemen. It doesn't look good for them at all. They can't, because people will remember that Yemen, first of all, for years, the Saudis, with the support of Turkey and other countries in the region, they carried out a genocidal war against Yemen. But they failed. It was like Gaza. They imposed starvation. The Saudis and Qatar were supporting it until the siege on Qatar. Then Qatar and Turkey tilted away from Saudi Arabia.

But they were supporting it, but they failed. And Yemen today is much stronger than it was back then. And Saudi Arabia is much weaker than it was back then. So I don't really see them having the capabilities to stop Yemen from striking Saudi ships or Saudi refineries or oil installations. They don't have anything that the United States didn't have. And of course, so many of those munitions are depleted now. Those anti-missile, anti-drone munitions that the United States has been bragging about—we are all hearing the news and seeing the news about the current shortages. And also, you know, in the past, Yemen has a history of wrecking the ambitions of other countries. Egypt in the 1960s under Jamal Abdel Nasser.

#Sayed M. Marandi

They invaded Yemen, and it was their Vietnam. And that's part of the reason why they failed so badly against the Israeli regime, because they had expended so much of their capabilities in Yemen. So I don't see this agreement as signifying much. Pakistan had this arrangement with Saudi Arabia more or less before. There are financial issues that lie behind this for Pakistan, military sales for Turkey. But they may try to do some things with Saudi Arabia. I'm not saying that they'll be

completely—it's just a piece of paper that's been signed. But I don't think it's going to have any major impact on...

#Glenn

Yemen's capabilities or the capabilities of the resistance in Iraq.

#Seyed M. Marandi

And of course, Iran defeated the combined forces of the United States and the Israeli regime. So I don't think that Iran is worried about any piece of paper signed in Saudi Arabia.

#Glenn

I was just thinking about your comments on hegemony, that is, why the collapse of the Soviet Union was also problematic for the U.S. People like Stephen Walt, they wrote a lot about this, that is, if you're a hegemon and there's no balance, he was always making the point that the greatest challenge for the U.S. is that states don't constrain themselves. Essentially, the U.S. would no longer be balanced; it would go out in every direction and exhaust itself and make a lot of enemies. This was the argument in the 1990s. And, you know, you can see why. That is, if you're a hegemon, unconstrained, you can do anything, and you can absorb the cost of this military adventurism.

So, essentially, this is a perfect condition for the rise of the hawks, when they say, "Well, why shouldn't we have military solutions for everything? Who can stop us?" And that's what you saw already from 1990, 1991. But then you're going to see predictable developments. That is, a decline of diplomacy, a decline of fiscal discipline. The moral compass will be thrown out. There will be a collapse in the trust of the political class. And that's when it exhausts itself economically. You'll also have political instability. And eventually the rising rivals at the periphery will begin to get closer together—the Chinese, Russians, Iranians—because they realize, you know, this is not a functioning international system.

And once the hegemon begins to decline, it will be desperate to hold on to power. And that's when you will see extremely foolish policies. So, the war in Iran, war in Russia, economic war in China. So I think a lot of this would be predictable. Of course, if you say that, well, actually, the best thing in the U.S. interest now is to accommodate a multipolar system where it can retrench, you're often met by arguments, "Oh, that's anti-American. You want to give more space for the Chinese and the Russians." This is, yeah, it's, you know, in my opinion, this is the medicine the U.S. needs to restore itself, go back to normalcy.

But it's a very difficult argument to make in this day and age when everything is emotional sloganeering. Anyways, I take your point on this Turkey-Saudi-Pakistani defense pact, that we shouldn't expect to see collective defense right away. But we also hear now that the deal between

Oman and Iran might be in its final stages. Again, I'm not sure to take these media reports with a grain of salt, but I do hear that from other places as well. So how significant would this be? And also, what would such a deal actually include? I guess, you know, you don't have it in front of you, but what can we expect being the main points there?

#Seyed M. Marandi

Well, just a couple of points. First, one is with regards to the United States. I agree with what you said completely. And even now, as all the indicators show that things are not going well at all, you still see that this myth of American exceptionalism still exists.

#Seyed M. Marandi

You don't see any change in U.S. policy, which, of course, is linked to corruption.

#Seyed M. Marandi

You know, the money that's going to the military-industrial complex and their lack of any ability to reform because they're making huge amounts of money and so on. I mean, the leadership is increasingly corrupt, manipulating the markets and then benefiting from it directly—their families, their allies. All that is true, but the myth is still—they still behave as if nothing will actually run out. This can—we can win somehow. We will come out on top. That continues to push the United States towards the cliff, whether it's economic or political or military. It's just moving forward. And I think by the time they'll really figure it out, even though they're seeing it, they have the evidence in front of them, it'll be too late.

And I think we're pretty close to that moment. But others know this. Others are looking objectively. The Iranians are calculating very carefully. The Russians are calculating carefully. The Chinese—everyone is calculating very carefully. And U.S. allies, I think they are beginning to recognize that this is, you know, they're in a very dangerous situation, these proxies, because none of them have any popular support. They don't have any mandate by their people to be U.S. proxies. And so that undermines their own authority because when that aura of power is gone, it is also gone for the proxies too.

And so even this alliance, whatever it is, it is not going to look good when it does nothing for Gaza, it does nothing for the West Bank, it does nothing for Lebanon, it does nothing for Syria. But let's say they collaborate against Yemen. Well, people will say, well, Yemen was a country that supported Gaza, that the United States went to war against because it blocked the Red Sea to the Israeli regime over Gaza. So these countries, Turkey, which does trade, transports oil to Netanyahu's regime, you know, and the others, they will be seen as, you know, fighting against the supporters of the Palestinian people.

You know, this is—the image is not, it will not be—I mean, you will see people online from these countries defending these policies, but these are basically elites that are close to the Saudis or close to the governments. And they will, of course, support this, and they will, you know, attack Yemen, they'll attack Iran. But people who are looking at the reality on the ground, about who's defending Lebanon, Palestine—it's the Axis of Resistance, no one else. They see through that. So it's going to be very difficult for the Americans in the months ahead because of all those indicators that you alluded to. It's going to be difficult for U.S. proxies to pursue the same policies, especially since that American power that they relied on is melting away.

And the public, which has not been satisfied with many things over the past few years, they will be raising more questions, and they'll probably become more feared by these governments. The governments will become more fearful of an angry population that wants to see the genocide in Gaza come to an end. And meanwhile, the Iranians are simply reiterating their position on Gaza. The Iranian chair of the Supreme National Security Council, in his statement yesterday, was very explicit about—and something which I've said repeatedly—that Palestine has to be a part of the MOU. It must be a part of the MOU. It is a part of the MOU for Iran, not just Gaza, but also the West Bank, because Iran didn't name Gaza.

It said Palestine. So none of this bodes well for the United States or its allies. And then, getting to your question on Iran and Oman, the negotiations between Iran and Oman, from my understanding, are almost complete. And probably one can say they've been completed. But I think since the issue of the Strait of Hormuz is linked to the broader issue of the MOU, then that is why the Iranians are holding back. Now, the Iranians never believed that the United States had any intention of implementing the MOU. Iran is not naive. But there are a number of reasons why Iran went for the MOU in the first place. One was that the Iranians want to export oil. Iran was under siege, so it accumulated a lot of oil in tankers, tens of millions of barrels.

As soon as the MOU was signed, Iran exported that oil to the Asian markets to strengthen its position for the months ahead. But also, Iran wanted its allies and friends across the world to know that Iran is seeking an agreement. It's not as if Iran wants a forever war. Unlike the United States, Iran wants to bring it to an end. And so this is a message to its friends, both regional friends and global friends, that there is an end in sight if the Americans have the will to move in that direction. And the Iranians, knowing that the United States would undermine the deal, had prepared themselves.

And we saw that in the war that resumed after the United States violated the deal and set up that corridor in the Strait of Hormuz against Article Five. When the United States resumed the war, Iran performed even better than the 40-day war. And we saw that the Iranian missiles and drones were hitting very hard. And then we saw Yemen enter the war as well because of the stupidity of the Saudis by attacking Sana'a International Airport. So it made things much worse for the United

States. So now the Iranians, they are going to— they're holding this back. They're holding this agreement where there will be fees. By the way, contrary to what Vance, the U.S. Vice President Vance, claimed, there will be fees.

But Iran is withholding this until the issue of the MOU is resolved, because Iran is saying that the United States has to go back to the MOU and it has to fulfill it in the way which we interpret it. And thus, the Iranians were more explicit in the statement yesterday. So the deal is ready for signing, from my understanding. There's no disagreement or anything like that that's holding it back. But the Iranians are waiting to see which direction the United States is going to go. Is it going to resume fighting? Because that's not an impossibility, Glenn. You and I both know that Trump is under enormous pressure from the Israeli regime, the Zionist lobby, his own ego, the Israeli firsters in the United States. He's under pressure to continue the war.

This is the sort of narrative that we continue to see on Fox News, for example. And we know that's where he gets his intelligence briefings, by watching Fox News. So it's not impossible. No one should count this out. The Iranians are preparing for war, and the region—Iran's allies—are preparing for war. In Iraq, they're preparing. In Yemen, they're preparing. But that's one scenario. The other scenario is for the Americans to decide, well, we have to end this. The situation with Japan is getting dangerous. The shortage of oil is intensifying at a very rapid pace, more rapid than before because of the Red Sea and because Iran is not allowing the Emirates to export either. So the pressure is on. But at the end of the day, the decision is made in the White House: which direction we move in.

#Glenn

Well, it is quite significant, though. As you say, the Oman-Iran deal is close to signing. This will more or less find a solution to the issue of the Strait of Hormuz, and I'm assuming that Oman is in close coordination with the U.S. and others, trying to also accommodate their interests. So it can be interpreted as a wider agreement which solves this issue. But as you said, it's not the only problem. It's not as if the war comes to an end with the signing, because the MOU—the United States has other obligations, as you said, they haven't fulfilled. That is, ending the blockade. I guess this could be done without too many problems. Ending the fighting in Lebanon, more problematic, I guess. The reparations, I don't see that happening either. But maybe in the way the language is framed, it can take on some form. I'm not sure if there's a compromise in terms of how this is made over time.

#Seyed M. Marandi

There are ways to do this. I mean, these countries in the Persian Gulf region, they have lots of money in the U.S. markets and in the West. And they, of course, they were with the United States in this war. But the MOU was devised in a way in which this, for example, the money that would come into Iran would effectively be a violation of U.S. sovereignty, or at least a violation of presidential decrees or decisions made by the U.S. government with regard to investment in Iran. And of course, I'm not familiar with the details, but the models that the Iranians have been devising are models

that are doable, but also they break the sanctions regime as well. So it doesn't have to come from the United States.

Of course, there are things that the United States will have to do. And there are many things that the United States will have to do. And first and foremost for the Iranians is handing over Lebanese territory back to the people of Lebanon, forcing the Israeli regime to back off in Gaza and the West Bank. I mean, these are key demands by Iran. This is not going to be over until there is peace in West Asia. And of course, Iran's assets that were stolen have to be returned, and the other issues which were discussed. But there are models in which these things can be carried out without the United States sending money from bank accounts in Washington to bank accounts in Tehran. There are other ways of doing it.

#Glenn

I'm just thinking the U.S., though, even if they do recognize all the paths to a potential victory have been exhausted, that they have to put an end to this thing. Domestic politics, though, it is an issue. I mean, Trump has spent like a decade, more than a decade now, saying how weak Obama was for unfreezing some Iranian assets. Also, the JCPOA was such a horrible deal. So the fact that he will have to now release Iranian funds and accept a deal which, at best, wouldn't be any different than the JCPOA, it's going to be a very hard sell in Washington.

#Seyed M. Marandi

It's not clear if we will ever get there, but Iran is not going to compromise. So, you know, the decision is theirs. It can be resolved within weeks. It can be resolved within months. And it can remain unresolved. But the Iranian position today, I think, is very different from what it was before. And it would be a further loss to the United States. So, you know, it's not as if the Iranians are expecting Trump to capitulate tomorrow and to carry out its obligations within the framework of the MoU based on the Iranian interpretation. But it does show the Iranian determination to make sure that the United States is defeated, and that its allies in the region, in Gaza, in Palestine, the people of Palestine, the West Bank, and elsewhere, that they feel the benefits of this U.S.-Israeli defeat.

Because at the end of the day, the defeat of the United States regime is a defeat for the Israeli regime. And the battle over the Strait of Hormuz was more important than any other battle that took place in West Asia during this period. Some would ask me, why didn't Iran strike the Israeli regime during these 13 days? Well, the Iranians were focused on winning the Strait of Hormuz, and a defeat for the United States is a defeat for the Israeli regime. Of course, during this period, Iran was struggling, destroying all those radar and defense installations that were built in the Persian Gulf and in Saudi Arabia and Jordan and in northern Iraq to protect the Israeli regime. They destroyed that so that if there's war, the Iranians can use their drones especially more easily, and their missiles.

And also, the Iranians want the crisis, the internal crisis in Israel that we're seeing now. If the Israelis attack, Iran will hit back hard to hurt Netanyahu if Netanyahu starts a war. But right now, before the elections, the Iranians want to see what happens in Palestine. Not that Netanyahu's opponents are any less genocidal, but this deep divide in Palestine is a good thing for the region. But ultimately, the battle for the Strait of Hormuz was the decisive battle. That was what basically changed the direction of the region and changed the future of the world. And what Yemen did was, it strengthened Hormuz. What happened in the Strait of Hormuz, it made the Strait of Hormuz even more important, because if Yemen had carried out these operations under normal circumstances, it would have bothered the Saudis.

It would have caused them significant damage, but it wouldn't have critically punished the Saudis or the Americans or the West. But now, when you look at what's happening in the Bab al-Mandab Strait alongside what's happened in the Strait of Hormuz, it becomes all the more effective. So no one in Iran is naive about the days and weeks and months ahead, but they are sending a very strong message to Washington that we won this war, and don't be under any illusion that you are going to be able to chip away at Iran's gains and the gains of the Axis of Resistance, chip them away at the negotiating table, or undermine them by cheating them in implementing an MOU or the MOU.

#Glenn

I think this is another problem for Trump, though, because he's been selling victories, or essentially the indicator of victory, as being, look how many people were killed or how much military or civilian infrastructure we were able to destroy. But these are not indicators of victory, as you said. This is a very complex conflict, and there are definitely better indicators of success here than killing opponents.

#Seyed M. Marandi

Probably the worst is not just the fact that the United States is continuing to support a genocide, but the fact that the United States is constantly threatening the Iranians with a Holocaust. I mean, not only has the United States failed militarily, but the United States and the West have been exposed. I mean, Western elites have been exposed morally. And that's why people are turning, in the West, people are turning against, and especially in the United States, against the political establishment. And we're seeing that play itself out in the civil war on the right and the civil war on, well, the Democratic Party. I don't know if you can call it the left, but in any case, that civil war is because of not just economic issues, but it's because of the moral bankruptcy of Western political elites, and people across the world see it.

And of course, also, the myth of U.S. power is broken. People see that, you know, every day the United States is saying that we destroyed this, we destroyed that. But, you know, every day the Iranians are firing missiles. So obviously they're not destroying all those things that they claim to

have destroyed. And it seems that those—I mean, even if the United States did not have the shortages that we're hearing about today, it would still lose because during the 40-day war, or 39 days of war, there was no talk of those shortages. I mean, those shortages existed, and the Iranians were depleting U.S. capabilities even beforehand. True Promise One, we recall, when Iran sent those missiles and drones, they spent huge quantities of—and then True Promise.

Two, all of these contributed to—and the war last year—all of these contributed to what we're seeing today. But even if those shortages didn't exist, or when they did not, the shortages weren't showing themselves on the battlefield during the 39, 40 days of war. But even then, they failed. They lost the war. They were using those missiles back then like there's no tomorrow. And ultimately, Trump, who demanded unconditional surrender, he was forced to accept the Iranian 10-point peace plan for the war to end after 39, 40 days. So the myth of American power has collapsed. And of course, the myth of the U.S. economy being the powerhouse of the world, that has failed too. And what's going on in Japan is just one indicator.

#Glenn

No, it's a big, big mess. And of course, the one thing Trump could do to sell this victory is, of course, if he could get a nuclear deal, another JCPOA. Because then he can claim, well, we prevented Iran from getting nuclear weapons. So he can sell the story that we inflicted so much pain on them that they had to sign this deal, and now they won't get nuclear weapons. But even on this issue, though, because from what I understand, Iranians don't want the U.S. to cherry-pick what they want out of an MOU, so the nuclear deal has to come at the end, which means that first the Americans will have to deal with the issues of ending sanctions, unfreezing Iranian assets, paying reparations, ending the blockade, and the war on Lebanon.

So in Gaza, we're not close to the end of the war just yet, I guess. And of course the Saudi deal that Trump might be making now, the nuclear deal, I guess that could also throw another wrench into the system. It's hard to imagine this not impacting Iran's position on a nuclear deal. If there's one set of rules for the Saudis and one for the Iranians, and as the White House explains, well, that's because the Saudis are an ally, and this is now apparently how the international system should work.

#Seyed M. Marandi

But even there, Trump humiliated Mohammed bin Salman. I mean, not only did he, a while back, say he can kiss him in his backside, but then after all the negotiations and the deal was agreed upon, then Trump comes out and says, "But first they have to accept..." I mean, the humiliation rituals are just extraordinary. The way in which the United States treats its friends and supposed friends, its proxies, is just unbelievable. And this contributes to their weakness. So Saudi Arabia, which has to, in order to get a nuclear... I mean, Iran offered... Some people say, "Is Iran afraid of Saudi Arabia having a nuclear program?"

Iran offered Saudi Arabia the technology for nuclear enrichment. It's been offering it for—I mean, people can check online. Iran has been saying this for many, many years, that if they want the technology, we'll give it to them. But the Saudis refrain from doing so. They refrain from getting it from China or from Russia. They just simply sit there and wait to see if the Americans will give it to them. And when the Americans finally agree to give it to them with many restrictions, then they say, "Oh, but you have to first bend the knee to Netanyahu." And then this does not strengthen the foundations of the ruling family.

#Glenn

Well, as a European, I'm all too familiar with how the U.S. humiliates its satellite states. So anyways, thank you again for taking time on a Sunday morning to speak with us. So thanks again.

#Seyed M. Marandi

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