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## *Pompeo's Speech Against Iran Reveals Failure of US Foreign Policy*



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After 28 years of military involvement in the region, the United States has caused the deaths of 4 million people in the Middle East, destroyed untold historic sites and antiquities, and done trillions of dollars of damage. Despite provoking further conflicts via the rise of ISIS in Iraq and Syria, as well as supporting the Saudi invasion of Yemen, the United States has only weakened its own position, as well as that of its Western allies, in the region. Meanwhile, Iran's influence in the region has consequently grown. On the world stage, the United States is losing strategic influence to China and Russia.

To make up for the weakness in American foreign policy decisions, Trump chose to withdraw unilaterally from the Iran Nuclear Deal, also known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), thereby demolishing the product of twelve years of intense diplomacy, whilst demonstrating that the United States violates its international commitments and is not a trustworthy partner on the international stage.

Blinded by the dream of preserving a unipolar world under its domination, and in order to make up for nearly three frustrating decades in the Middle East, the United States is now resorting to scapegoating its rivals, such as Iran, for its own terrible decisions.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's recent speech, and his announcement of a 12-point "road map" towards limiting Iran's conduct in its own region of the world, actually exposes the US's own abject failure in the Middle East, as contrasted with the comparative success of Iran's.

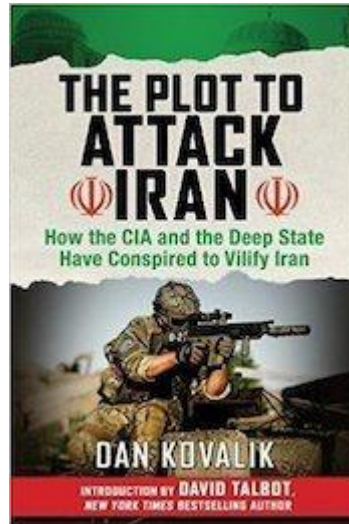
The statements made in Pompeo's so-called "road map", and Iran's response to them can be summarized as follows:

- + That Iran ought to declare all military aspects of its previous nuclear program to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), despite the fact that the Agency has already reiterated in successive reports that Iran has fully adhered to its commitments under the framework of the JCPOA and that the country's nuclear program has been exclusively peaceful.

- + Pompeo demanded that Iran should completely shut down its enrichment program and cease to pursue plutonium reprocessing. According to the IAEA, Iran's enrichment has not exceeded 3.67 percent, a level all countries are allowed to enrich for medical and research purposes, and an activity that is explicitly permitted under the JCPOA.

- + Demands that Iran declare full access to all sites throughout the country, even though the IAEA already has had unrestricted access for the Agency's inspectors to all nuclear sites in Iran.

- + Perhaps the most comical part of the "road map" was the call for Iran to halt its ballistic missile program and alleged program for nuclear-capable missiles – a call which ignores



the fact that nuclear weapons have been declared religiously forbidden by the country's highest religious and political authority. This claim is particularly ironic coming from a country that has used nuclear weapons against Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, and currently has a stockpile of nearly seven thousand nuclear weapons. Iran on the other hand, does not even make the top 40 in the world's arms trade, and only accounts for one percent of military expenditures in the Middle East.

+ Requesting that Iran stop all terrorist support begs the question of why support for terrorism is regarded as good and legitimate when, for example, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton admitted the role of the CIA in supporting both ISIS and the Taliban. In addition, Pompeo's condemning and labelling Hezbollah as a terrorist organization simply misses the mark, as many US experts themselves admit, given Hezbollah's victory in the most recent democratic elections in Lebanon, and its successful preservation of the country's sovereignty against foreign aggression.

+ A demand which Iran has already fulfilled at great human and material cost is respecting, and indeed defending, Iraq's sovereignty and independence. Iran was the only country that opposed the expansion of ISIS in Iraq and against the wishes of the United States, and supported the Iraqi popular forces and the Iraqi Army in defeating ISIS. The popular forces are today a part of the army and an important tool for preserving the security of Iraq, and decisions regarding their future is in the hands of the people of Iraq who firmly declared their support in the most recent elections. At a time when the United States declared that its support for defeating ISIS was contingent upon the resignation of the Iraqi government, Iran supported both Baghdad and Kurdish areas against ISIS aggression.

+ In declaring that Iran should end its (quite limited) support for the Houthis in Yemen, Pompeo seems to have forgotten that it is Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates who

are bombing the Yemeni people, as well as enforcing a devastating land and sea blockade against them. The United States is aiding and abetting this genocidal war by selling arms worth several hundred billion dollars to Saudi Arabia, refuelling its fighter jets in mid-air and helping to enforce the crippling blockade which is starving Yemen of food and necessary medicines. The UN estimates that, as a result of this assault on Yemen, a staggering 10 million Yemenis will die by the year's end.

+ Pompeo demanded the full withdrawal of Iran from Syria despite the fact that Iran has not occupied a shred of Syrian land. This comes from a government whose President refused to accept Syrian refugees, labelling them as “animals”. During his election campaign, Trump quite correctly blamed former president Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton for creating ISIS. Iran's presence in Syria, on the other hand, is contingent on the request of the Syrian government, meaning that its forces will withdraw whenever Syria decides it is time. Meanwhile, contrary to international law, the US is actively occupying a third of Syria, and the most resource-rich part of that country, and it has made it clear that will continue to occupy this region indefinitely.

+ Pompeo's demand that Iran ought to end support for the Taliban and stop harbouring senior Al-Qaida leaders is a demand that seems more appropriate to be directed to the United States government which no longer seems to be able to control its own puppets on the ground, and which was the first nation to recognise the Taliban after it took over Afghanistan by force.

Pompeo's claim about Iran and its neighbours simply reflect little understanding of the history of the country or the region. For the past 100 years, Iran has been subjected to military aggression from its neighbours, experiencing military occupation during both World Wars. After the Islamic Revolution of 1979, it went through eight years of war, defending itself from Saddam Hussain and the MEK — the latter which, despite assassinating 17,000 Iranians and even several Americans as well, have now developed a strong relationship with Pompeo and Trump's National Security Advisor, John Bolton.

It should be mentioned that even prior to the recent antics, the Iranian people had little reason to accept the “goodwill” of the United States. The CIA's 1953 coup d'état against the democratically-elected government of Mohammad Mossadegh; the brutal sanctions regime of the past decades; the attempted coups, such as the Nojeh Coup of 1980; and the sale of VX nerve agent and other chemical weapons to Saddam Hussain during the height of the Iran-Iraq war have not been forgotten. The devastation of Iran's neighbouring

countries by the US, and the US's banning of Iranians from entry, are also hard to overlook.

Lastly, it should be noted that Iran has made it abundantly clear that whenever the United States withdraws the Fifth Fleet from Bahrain, as well as the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait, and the Sixth Fleet leaves the Mediterranean and end their military presence in the region, the Quds Force shall also return to Tehran.

*Daniel Kovalik, the author of [The Plot to Attack Iran](#), wrote this piece with the significant help and encouragement of friends in Tehran.*