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Iran, Russia and USA: 36 years after Islamic Revolution

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February 11 is the date to mark the 36th anniversary of the Iran's Islamic revolution – one of the most important events of the XX century formally called the Day of the National Manifestation of Solidarity with the Policy of the Leadership of the Islamic Republic and Loyalty to Ideas of Islamic Republic of Iran Founder Imam Khomeini. Normally it's the time for the government to sum up and assess the results of its work. This year the relationship with Washington and Moscow tops the foreign policy agenda. Tehran cooperates with Moscow taking into consideration the prospects for ending international isolation and restoring full-fledged relationship with the West.

In its time the Islamic revolution changed the geopolitical situation in the Middle East to entail

grave consequences. Faithful to Islam the new government strived for exporting the revolution to other countries. If not for this expansion, probably the USSR would not have intervened into Afghanistan in December 1979. The fight against imperialism proclaimed by Khomeini did not spare the Soviet Union though the United States was number one enemy. The US is still at the top of the adversaries' list while the relationship with Moscow has seen ups and downs.

Now when the Russia-US relationship is at low ebb, the both sides expect Iran to leave behind the policy of compromises and make its stance clear. But they adopt different policies on Iran. The White House wants to block any cooperation between Tehran and Moscow with Iran remaining to be one of main adversaries. The plans to change the regime are still in force. The Kremlin has chosen to build strategic partnership with the Islamic Republic of Iran without using anti-Americanism as a basis. There is no «it's either us or them» approach.

To the contrary, Moscow is interested in full-fledged participation of Iran in tackling the most burning regional issues, like Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. Washington cannot deny the Iran's crucial role in the process of crisis management but continues to keep it internationally isolated. The example is the US reluctance to join efforts with Iran in fighting the Islamic State in Iraq.

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the Iran's spiritual leader, has been emphasizing recently that the US was involved in plots and intrigues since the very start of the revolution to become even more cynical as time went by. America has opposed Iran on each and every occasion for 36 years. In 1979 US State Secretary Cyrus Vance said that the Islamic government coming to power in Iran to terminate the alliance with America constituted the most threatening challenge to the US in the XX century. It still rings true. Washington has not deviated from the position taken by the administration of Jimmy Carter which believed that punishing the Islamic revolution would set a good lesson for those who strived for independence.

The US is making a mistake thinking that with Hassan Rouhani in power Iran will put aside ideological differences to normalize the relations with Washington. There is nothing changed in Iran's approaches on the issue of restoring the ties with America. The Washington's desire to change the government structure of Iran is absolutely unacceptable. The United States does not need allies. It seeks vassals and the US position is unambiguous – it's either you are with us or you are against us. The normalization of US-Iran relations is practically excluded as America cannot stop supporting Israel. Tehran is sure that the US will rather act to its own detriment than sacrifice the interests of Tel Aviv. It's well known that Israel plays a negative role trying to influence US lawmakers on the issue of Iran's nuclear program tackled by the Big Six. The majority of lawmakers in the both houses do not approve the idea of coming to terms with Tehran and lifting sanctions.

Iran gets more skeptical about the ability of President Obama to change it. Nothing proves that the US administration is ready to take into consideration the position of other members of the Big Six. Iran insists on reaching agreements in compliance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, (commonly known as the Non-Proliferation Treaty or NPT). In its demands the United States wants Iran to go much farther than the conditions set by the Treaty. In response the Iranian parliament has already taken a decision to re-launch the nuclear program in case the United States imposes additional sanctions against the country.

The White House has not dropped the insulting rhetoric. President Obama and the members of his team use the very same language the US used 36 years back. Washington calls Iran «a rogue state» and speaks about the «Shia axis of evil». In response Iran can remember that the US is a very young state in comparison with Persia. The debates on foreign policy priorities presupposing a choice between Moscow and Washington continue among Iranian political circles. Moscow and Tehran have the same or close views on many regional problems and aspects of bilateral relationship. Russia and Iran are constantly in contact. Iranian President Hassan Rouhani has said many times that the relationship with the Russian Federation is of special and growing importance. At the same time some say in Tehran that Russia has not distanced itself enough from the West to be trusted. But this is a wrong way to talk to Moscow.

As a country located on two continents Russia has never faced a choice between the West and the East. The US attempts to hinder the Russia's progress and establish its hegemony in the world will be resolutely rebuffed. Talking at the Congress of Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia on February 7 President Vladimir Putin says, «Russia would never agree to such a world order. Maybe some like it, they want to live in a semi-occupied state, but we will not do it. However, we will not go to war with anyone either, we intend to cooperate with everyone». In the plans to develop such cooperation Iran is on the list of Russia's foreign policy priorities.