

IRAN IN FOCUS



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Taking Stock: The Iran Deal One Year Later

The Iran nuclear deal was announced one year ago on July 14, 2015. Known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), it has temporarily pushed back Iran's breakout time to a nuclear weapon. However, it has neither curbed Iran's nuclear ambitions nor reduced Iran's aggressive behavior in the Middle East. The United States has been forthcoming in providing Iran benefits beyond those required by the JCPOA, but has not imposed strong measures to hold Iran accountable for continued malign behavior. In order to thwart Iranian aggression and discourage further violations of the JCPOA, the United States must take meaningful and decisive action to ensure Iranian compliance.

The United States should not reward Iran's ongoing malign behavior with unilateral concessions.

- Iran decommissioned two-thirds of its installed centrifuges, from a total of 19,000 to 6,104.
- Iran reduced its stockpile of about 10,000 kg of low-enriched uranium (LEU) to 300 kg.
- Iran reconfigured the Arak heavy water reactor to limit production of plutonium.



But problems implementing the JCPOA have emerged.

- The Obama administration has publicly confirmed that Iran has engaged in activities "not in compliance" with the JCPOA, but has failed to detail its findings. At least one of these violations occurred when Iran exceeded limits on its stockpile of heavy water.
- Iran has also continued to seek illicit nuclear technology, according to a July 2016 intelligence report from the German Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, the equivalent of the FBI in the United States.
- In December 2015, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) closed its investigation of Iran's nuclear weaponization efforts even though it admittedly lacked a complete understanding of Tehran's past nuclear weaponization efforts.
- Public reporting of IAEA efforts over the past year indicate that no snap inspections or real inspections of military facilities have taken place.

The IAEA has failed to carry out follow-up inspections at the Parchin military facility despite the discovery of uranium particles in soil samples taken at the site in September 2015.

- The JCPOA promised unprecedented transparency into Iran’s nuclear program. However, IAEA reports on compliance with the JCPOA have withheld public disclosure of key information.

Concerns remain over weaknesses in the agreement.

- The JCPOA legitimized Iran’s nuclear program, and will enable Iran to ultimately build an industrial-scale nuclear program. While the agreement lengthens Iran’s breakout time today, restrictions on Iran’s program begin to lift within a decade. After 15 years Iran will be a nuclear-threshold state: no restrictions will remain on the number or type of centrifuges Iran will be able to install or the number of enrichment facilities it can build. Iran will have the potential for breakout within days.
- The JCPOA did not require Iran to come clean on the past military dimensions of its nuclear program.
- The JCPOA put in place an inspection regime that failed to achieve “anytime, anywhere” inspections.
- The JCPOA set in motion a process by which virtually all economic, financial and energy sanctions are being lifted. Iran is already modernizing its military and increasing its support for terrorist groups.

The United States has increased benefits to Iran beyond the JCPOA, but not held it accountable.

- The United States has gone beyond its JCPOA commitments to actively encourage international businesses and financial institutions to engage with Iran.
- In April, the administration unnecessarily legitimized part of Iran’s nuclear program by agreeing to buy heavy water from Iran—a purchase not required under the JCPOA.
- In June 2016, the U.S. supported a decision undertaken by the Financial Action Task Force to suspend countermeasures against Iran for 12 months. The decision was based on Iranian promises to crack down on terrorist financing—although Iran exempted groups like Hezbollah and Hamas.
- The administration has failed to vigorously enforce non-nuclear sanctions on Iran. In the past year, Iran has continued its missile activity in violation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 2231, enhanced its support for terrorism, increased its destabilizing regional actions, and maintained its deplorable record on human rights.

Congress must press for a stronger response to Iran’s actions.

- Congress must challenge any effort to provide additional benefits to Iran beyond those explicitly enumerated in the JCPOA. The United States is under no obligation to encourage business with Iran and should not do so without substantial change in Iranian behavior.
- Congress must press the administration to impose tougher measures in response to Iranian provocations and violations of U.N. Security Council resolutions. The failure to act has likely led Iran to conclude it can continue malign activities with near impunity.
- Congress must enact legislation to increase the costs on Iran over its continued missile activity, support for terrorism and other destabilizing activities.
- Congress must extend the Iran Sanctions Act (ISA)—which is set to expire at the end of 2016—so that there are sanctions in place to “snap back” should Iran violate the nuclear agreement. Extending ISA will signal to Tehran that Congress is carefully scrutinizing its actions and will hold it accountable.