

Negotiating with US has some ifs, buts

Trump will not underwrite Netanyahu



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OPINION

The Trump administration has officially started working, and now it remains to be seen what foreign policies Donald Trump will pursue, especially in the Middle East, and how the relations between Iran and the US will be shaped.

Although Donald Trump's inauguration address at the US Capitol contained a series of populist slogans, it seemed to be more mature compared to his first-term inauguration speech. The absence of radical figures, such as Mike Pompeo, in his cabinet has elevated the relative rationality of Trump's team this time around. The presence of Elon Musk, the American billionaire and the world's richest man, in his cabinet sends the message that the US wants to stay away from international tensions.

Trump, having experienced a term as president, has realized that he made many mistakes in his first term, including withdrawing from the JCPOA, which was done under the influence of Zionist lobbies and pressures from Pompeo. It seems that Trump wants to make up for some of his past mistakes. Now, there is a possibility of

establishing a dialogue between Iran and the US within the framework of the JCPOA, provided that the US returns to the JCPOA and abandons its aggressive policies against Iran and the Resistance Axis. One of the important points in the current Trump administration is the absence of Pompeo. He had a strong affinity for Zionist figures and was actually

the one who shaped the foreign policy of the Trump administration in the first term. The absence of Pompeo in the Trump administration indicates that Trump wants to focus more on solving America's domestic problems. On the other hand, Trump will not underwrite Netanyahu's risks because he believes that during the Biden era, the US

incurred huge costs because of Israel. He believes that the US was taken advantage of in the Middle East and therefore will probably not unconditionally surrender to Israel's demands. Regarding the stance of various domestic forces on negotiating with the US, it should be noted that pursuing our national interest and regional peace are the overall policies of the Islam-

ic Republic of Iran. Any group that wants to move against this policy has not considered the national interest and has not served Iran. Now, all domestic forces must see in which direction the establishment's policy is moving and what the national interest requires. If the West and the US treat Iran respectfully and reduce pressure on Iran and the Re-

sistance Axis, negotiating with them can lead to securing our national interests under certain conditions. However, it is natural that if the new US administration wants to pursue aggressive policies against Iran, negotiating with such a government will be of no benefit.

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Former US president Donald Trump talks on the phone aboard Air Force One during a flight to Philadelphia on January 26, 2017.
● SHEALAH CRAIGHEAD/WHITE HOUSE



Then-secretary of state Mike Pompeo (R) looks on as former president Donald Trump makes remarks about the Turkey/Syria Border at the White House in Washington, the US, on October 23, 2019.
● THE NEW YORK TIMES

Challenges of mediation between Tehran, Washington



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PERSPECTIVE

Mediation, as one of the mechanisms for resolving international disputes, has proven its effectiveness in various fields many times; but can the principle of mediation at least pave the way for holding talks between Iran and the US or speed up the process?

These days, the discussion of readiness to start negotiations is heated; in order to achieve this, one of the most frequently discussed topics is the visit of senior officials to Tehran to mediate.

The names of countries such as Japan, Oman, and Iraq came up more than any other country as mediators for potential Iran-US talks, although no official news of mediation by these countries has been released. None of these countries have officially introduced themselves as mediator or messenger. However, the frequent interactions between them and Washington have fueled rumors in this area.

The advantages of the mediation process are clear: mediation is a voluntary process, and the right to accept or reject the mediation proposal lies with the parties to the dispute. Also, the result of mediation is non-binding, and the non-binding nature of mediation distinguishes it from other forms of intervention, such as arbitration.

However, there are many challenges to mediation between Tehran and Washington that have made it difficult to achieve:

The first and perhaps most important challenge is the deep mistrust and ideological differences between Iran and the US, which, like an impenetrable dam, has cast a shadow over the relations between the two countries for more than five decades. The second challenge is the role of the Zionist regime, Iran's hostile relationship with this regime, and the regime's interests in the lack of agreement between the parties. The third issue of disagreement between Tehran and Washington is the difference in the method and goal of negotiation between the two sides. Usually, the Iranian side seeks to establish and increase communica-

tion, as well as to pursue limited and single-issue negotiation, but the opposite side often prioritizes efficiency and multi-issue negotiations. Add to these the differences in the views of the two sides on the Middle East and its stability, so that we can better understand what challenges confront the country and the mediator. Finally, owing to the current interactive atmosphere, many international disputes have been resolved peacefully in recent decades through mediation by reputable personalities, governments, and international organizations. However, in Iran, it seems that economic hardships, the sharp increase in exchange rates, the subsequent staggering rise in prices, and the promise of lifting sanctions in Pezeshkian's government have upped the public pressure on the government. It is expected that the diplomatic apparatus of the country becomes a more powerful actor than any mediator and mediation to speed up the process of starting talks and resolving international disputes.

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Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (R) meets with Omani Foreign Minister Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi in Tehran, Iran, on December 30, 2024.
● president.ir