

Israel after disintegration in pushing Trump to attack Iran

INTERVIEW

Iran-Europe ties have entered an ambiguous and tense phase in recent months—a phase in which diplomatic language has given way to blunt, and at times hostile, statements by some European leaders, and their official stances on Iran's internal developments are interpreted as going beyond the conventional norms of international relations. At the same time, signs of Europe's growing alignment with Washington's pressure-driven approach have raised serious questions about the continent's real standing in the diplomatic dealings with Tehran.

In this climate, speculation is running rampant about the role of European capitals in encouraging the United States to ramp up pressure on Iran, even to the point of pursuing high-cost options.

Against this backdrop, Jalal Sadatian, Iran's former ambassador to Britain, has discussed the objectives and consequences of Europe's recent policies toward Iran. Sadatian believes that developments following the Ukraine war placed Europe in a confrontational position vis-à-vis Iran, and that European actors are now fueling the narrative that Iran has turned against its own people, seizing the opportunity to settle scores with Tehran. He adds that under these circumstances, Tehran's diplomacy must also be reassessed, particularly as to why it failed to take steps

to prevent the emergence of such conditions.

Following recent positions taken by European officials on Iran's internal unrest—including remarks by the German chancellor and European Union officials—can it be said that Europe has effectively moved off the diplomatic track and entered a phase of direct political confrontation with Iran?

SADATIAN: These days, we are witnessing the formation of an international propaganda line claiming that Iran has been weakened. At the same time, a similar narrative has been taking shape in the US Congress, particularly driven by the Israeli lobby. All these efforts revolve around the assertion that Iran is in its weakest position, attributing

this situation to recent domestic dissatisfaction and protests, as well as earlier developments in the Middle East, including what unfolded after October 7, 2023, in the Gaza Strip, Lebanon, and Syria. Within this same framework, the issue of the Israeli 12-day war against Iran in June is also raised. In that war Iran responded effectively to the aggression, to the point that the US called for a cease-fire. Some in Iran criticized the decision, asking why Tehran accepted a cease-fire at a moment when conditions were such that it could

have inflicted greater damage on the Zionist regime [of Israel] and created stronger deterrence to sustain a halt to hostilities. At the same time, there was another analysis suggesting that the continuation of Iranian attacks could have provided a pretext for deeper US involvement in the conflict. Ultimately, various considerations converged on the decision to accept a cease-fire. So, when we speak of developments after October 2023, this is what I am referring



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu answers a question, as US President Donald Trump looks on, during a dinner at the White House on July 7, 2025.

AFP

to, in brief.

In the latest developments, we have seen popular protests driven by economic and livelihood hardships, along with some criticisms that were initially acknowledged by the authorities, who even decided to engage in dialogue with protesters and hear their grievances. However, the protest movement later turned violent, and the government's assessment is that the initial peaceful protests were derailed through external guidance. It must be noted that the nationwide shutdown of international internet access added to the ambiguities.

As a result of this combination of factors, the field was left wide open for foreign propaganda and the activities of anti-Iranian entities to promote and amplify the idea of Iran's weakness. Consequently, the West moved to justify its interventions under the cover and instruments of human rights. In this atmosphere, we witnessed Europe falling into step with the United States. This is even though Europe, on its own bilateral issues, has been in its worst state of relations with Trump's America, due to White House claims regarding Greenland, the Ukraine war, and trade tariffs, all of which have caused serious rifts between Europe and the United States.

Unfortunately, in recent years Iran failed to mend fences



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with Europe over disputes that emerged in the wake of the Ukraine war. Europe came to view Iran as a direct adversary, standing alongside Russia against the security of the continent. As a result, the snapback mechanism was instigated by the European Troika, and we are now witnessing a hostile approach by European leaders at this juncture. European countries have concluded that the overall conditions surrounding Iran have created the best possible confrontational opportunity for them, and thus they are fanning the claim that Iran has turned against its own people. Under such circumstances, Tehran's diplomacy must also be reexamined and subjected to critical review as to why it was unable to take steps to prevent the formation of this situation in relations with Europe.

Reports suggest that some European states have sought to encourage US President Donald Trump to pursue tougher options against Iran, even to the level of military action. What specific strategic interests is Europe pursuing by following such a path?

I believe that encouraging the United States to go to war with Iran is being driven by the Zionist lobby, which seeks the fragmentation of Iran in order to break a country that has mounted serious resistance to Israel's illegitimate expansionism. At the same time, they believe that the regional resistance will, over time and with Iran's backing, rebuild and reconstitute itself. It can be said that the aim of these pressures is to draw the United States militarily into the Middle East.

My assessment is that Europeans are not particularly eager for a unilateralist America to take control of Middle Eastern governance. Countries such as France and Britain still see themselves as having a rightful stake in our region and maintain a sense of attachment to it. Therefore, some individual remarks should not be taken as Europe's overall position. We should not forget that Europe lacks consensus on foreign policy issues. That said, our own performance has led them to close ranks and find common ground in opposing Iran.

This interview first appeared on IRNA in Persian.



A general view of the European Parliament.

dpa

Escalated US military presence in Persian Gulf: Deterrence, messaging, and strategic anxiety



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OPINION EXCLUSIVE

The United States has significantly stepped up its military

presence in the Persian Gulf, most visibly through the deployment and docking of naval forces in Bahrain, which hosts the US Navy's Fifth Fleet. The arrival and movement of warships, destroyers and support vessels have attracted close attention across the region, prompting renewed scrutiny of Washington's intentions at a time of height-

ened geopolitical tension. At face value, US officials describe these deployments as routine maritime security measures, designed to uphold freedom of navigation and protect global energy supply routes. The Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz remain among the world's most vital maritime chokepoints, where even limited

disruption could ripple quickly through international energy markets. From this standpoint, the reinforced naval presence is presented as reassurance to US allies, particularly Persian Gulf Arab states, that Washington remains committed to regional stability and security. Yet beyond official messaging, both the timing and the scale

of the deployments point to a broader strategic calculation. Rather than signaling preparation for an imminent military confrontation, the buildup functions primarily as a deterrent, rather than a preparation for imminent military confrontation. By maintaining a visible and sustained naval presence, Washington aims to demon-

strate readiness, shape escalation dynamics and discourage unilateral actions that could further destabilize the region. At the same time, this display of force reflects a deeper strategic reality: the gradual erosion of uncontested US dominance in the Persian Gulf. Over the past decade, regional power balances have shifted. Iran's growing