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Multiple channels of contact with US could undermine Iran's unified foreign policy

By Delaram Ahmadi
Staff writer

INTERVIEW
EXCLUSIVE

The repercussions of the US war against Iran have extended beyond regional countries, affecting the entire world and prompting various countries to step in and seek a resolution. Former diplomat Abolghasem Delfi told Iran Daily that multiple channels of communication with Washington could prove counterproductive for Iran, potentially creating the impression that there is no unified voice on foreign policy within the country.



Abolghasem Delfi

IRAN DAILY: **Could current regional diplomatic efforts, including the Qatari emir's visit, Turkey's contacts and the Iraqi prime minister's trip, prevent the war from flaring up again?**

DELFI: The situation following the US elections and the difficulties facing the Republican Party, particularly the loss of control of Congress, is a challenging one. President Donald Trump has only a limited window until January 1 to take action, if he intends to do so, before the new congressional situation fully takes shape.

Against this backdrop, it appears that plans are taking shape during the remaining period to help Trump achieve what he is seeking.

Regional diplomatic visits and exchanges should, in principle, be taken seriously if they reflect a broader realization among regional countries, following two or three wars and more than a year of tensions, that they need to establish a different kind of relationship with Iran.

However, I do not think this is necessarily the thinking behind these diplomatic moves. Over the past year or two, following several rounds of fighting and US and Israeli aggression against Iran, various mediation efforts have been undertaken by Oman, Qatar, Pakistan, Russia and, more recently, China. All these countries tried to find a way to bring the war to an end and establish peace. But, ultimately, none of these efforts produced results. Not only did the mediation attempts fail, but they also served as stepping stones for subsequent acts of aggression.

The lesson we should draw from this experience is that these diplomatic exchanges need to be viewed in the context of our national interests. If they are aimed at strengthening regional security, developing bilateral relations with neighboring countries, changing the regional security landscape and establishing collective security arrangements, then we should approach them accordingly.

But if the purpose is to change Iran's relations with the United States and move them toward peace and calm, I do not think that is very achievable. Past experience has also demonstrated this.

Overall, mediation efforts should certainly be welcomed, but within a framework that allows us to define shared interests with regional countries. The region needs to understand Iran's position and the framework within which regional countries should operate. As for returning to the pre-war situation and having these countries bring Iran and the United States to a peace agreement, experience has shown that such efforts have not led anywhere, nor have we gained any concessions through them.

Western media outlets are drawing distinctions between different camps within the US administration, arguing that some favor an agreement, others support war, while a third group advocates escalating the blockade and economic pressure. Do you consider this assessment accurate? If so, could the pro-agreement camp gain the upper hand?

These debates were already taking place in the United States before the elections. In any case, public opinion polls published at the time showed that a considerable majority of Americans did not support the war.

When Trump took office, he campaigned on a promise to end wars. Not only was that promise left unfulfilled, but further wars were also imposed on the American public, forcing US taxpayers to shoulder the cost of additional conflicts.

One point worth noting is that, in the US elections, voters did not give the Republicans their support. However, whether the Democrats are now viewed as preferable to the Republicans remains an open question in the broader assessment of the election results. That question will ultimately be answered in the next presidential election.

Therefore, conditions will gradually move in a direction that favors those within both the Republican Party and the broader American establishment who opposed the war. They will seek to present themselves as having been against the war from the outset, or at least as having expressed reservations about it. They will try to demonstrate that they had consistently voiced their concerns in various ways. This will help them distance themselves from the pro-war faction and strengthen their standing in public opinion.

Therefore, this confrontation is taking shape in the US media landscape and will undoubtedly intensify, particularly as the country approaches its next electoral cycle over the coming one or two years.

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