

"US, UAE, Saudi Arabia Forming Alliance against Iran"

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Senior political analyst Seyyed Hossein Mousavian says the US, Saudi Arabia and the UAE are forming an alliance to counter Iran in the region.

Mousavian, a senior researcher at Princeton University, has, in an article published on the website of the Persian-language *Donya-ye Eqtesad* daily, weighed in on the danger posed to the Middle East region by an alliance of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the Israeli regime. The full text of the opinion piece follows.

It has been months that the lobbyists from Riyadh, Tel Aviv and Abu Dhabi are urging the White House to cut off the tail of the region's snake (the Lebanese Hezbollah movement) before cutting off Iran's head. There are signs that a triangle comprising Washington, Tel Aviv and Riyadh is taking shape to counter Iran in the region, including efforts to deal a blow to the Iran nuclear deal (known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the JCPOA), adoption of tougher bills in the US Congress to slap sanctions on Hezbollah and the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), commemorating the killing of 241 US Marines in Beirut 34 years ago and accusing Iran and Hezbollah of involvement in the incident, inviting Haider Al-Abadi to Saudi Arabia to revive Riyadh-Baghdad ties while promising to give assistance to Iraq and make huge investments in the country along with ratcheting up the pressure on the Popular Mobilization Units in Iraq, US President Donald Trump's accusing Iran of having provided Yemen with the missile it fired at Riyadh [in retaliation for the Saudi aggression on Yemen], the resignation of Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri under the pretext that Iran and Hezbollah are meddling in running Lebanon's affairs, and worst of all, the CIA's publication of forged documents suggesting Iran has links with al-Qaeda.

After the 9/11 terrorist attacks in New York, Congress allowed the US government to go into war against individuals and countries directly or indirectly involved in the attacks. The green light was used by Washington to launch military operations in countries such as Iraq, Afghanistan, etc.

In order for the US president to be able to attack a country without the Congress' all-clear, he must prove that the country in question was somehow linked to the 9/11 attacks and the terrorists involved. Accordingly, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) released forged documents suggesting Iran was linked to al-Qaeda or its affiliated groups.

Washington's excuse to attack Iraq was based on similar forged documents. Then US President George W. Bush gave the green light to attack Iraq based on the same documents. Later on, it came to light that all the documents had been forged as no weapons of mass destruction were found in Iraq. Now, there are serious discussions going on in the US Congress to extend the go-ahead to wage war against entities involved in the 9/11 attacks. The Tel Aviv-Riyadh-Abu Dhabi lobby in Washington is seeking to use the go-ahead against Iran. US lawmakers are engaged in intense talks as many of them are not confident that Trump will extend the all-clear. In the meantime, the anti-Iran triangle is trying to urge Trump to use the approval against Iran or its regional allies before it expires.

A few days ago, after my speech at a meeting at a Washington hotel about Washington's breaches of promises, a renowned and well-informed expert from an American think tank told me that Congress was unlikely to repeal the Iran nuclear deal despite pressure from the Israeli lobby unless developments unfold in the coming weeks that might change Congress' equations. He said the White House was reviewing a scenario to pull out of the JCPOA without reinstating the sanctions lifted due to the agreement. They believe that under such circumstances, Europe will have to align itself with US policies and actions against Iran in the region because with the US withdrawal from the JCPOA, Europe will realize that the US knows now restrictions to impose new nuclear sanctions on Iran.

Since Trump came to power, despite some optimism in Iran, I have kept drawing attention to the danger posed by the abovementioned alliance in order to torpedo the JCPOA and trigger a regional faceoff with Iran. Tel Aviv is the winner in the current situation in the Arab world. Powerful Arab countries have either lost their leverage, or have plunged into a local crisis, or have come under Tel Aviv's influence. It seems a new scenario has been engineered against Iran, a scenario the details of which they are preparing. What was mentioned at the beginning of this article was part of their actions to piece together the scenario, and other parts of the scenario are likely to come to light in the coming months.

Among the complicated and pre-planned scenarios is some of Trump's behaviour and positions in recent months. As a case in point, Trump's proposal to meet Iranian authorities was a calculated move. Trump proposed to sit down with President Hassan Rouhani because he was sure that Iran would not accept his suggestion. Trump involved France as a mediator in order to tell the Europeans that, "I was ready for talks with Iran. It was the Iranians who rejected the offer," and so, Iran does not favour negotiations. So, the White House's move was aimed at stripping Europe of its ammunition regarding Iran and paving the way for sparking a standoff with Iran.

Another key point is that Trump's approval ratings are on the decline, and two-thirds of the American public have a low opinion of him. "Confrontation with Iran" is an issue which can secure a consensus and popular support within the US more easily than other issues. That makes it all the more necessary for Iranian officials to take the threat seriously and adopt measures for deterrence and countering the threat.