



# IRAN



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**Iranian political factions:**

**Religious leadership (Ayatollah Ali Khamenei)**

- The U.S. cannot be trusted.
- Not opposed to direct talks with the U.S., but not optimistic that any good could come of it.
- U.S. does not respect the Islamic identity of Iran.
- U.S. constantly interferes in Iran's affairs and will do anything to harm the Iranian government.
- Because Iran's Islamic government rejects foreign domination, the U.S. wants regime change so it can exploit Iran's natural resources.

**Hardliners (Principlists)**—Right-wing conservatives. A minority but especially prevalent among the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). Strong in rural areas and among the very religious. (Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, former President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, former Major General Qasem Soleimani, current President Ebrahim Raisi).

- There is inherent antagonism between the U.S. and Iran.
- The U.S. cannot be trusted. Do not negotiate with the U.S.
- U.S. does not respect the Islamic identity of Iran
- U.S. constantly interferes in Iran's affairs and will do anything to harm the Iranian government.
- There is a deep contrast between Islamic values and Western values. Reconciliation would conflict with Islamic values.
  - When the U.S. demands that Iran change its behavior, it actually means that the U.S. wants to strip Iran of its Islamic values. Iran is the spearhead of resistance to the U.S.' global arrogance.
  - Talking to the U.S. is like shaking hands with the devil.
- Since President Trump withdrew the U.S. from the nuclear agreement (JCPOA) the hardliners, even though a minority, have taken control of the Iranian government.

**Moderates**--agree in principal with Ayatollah Ali Khamenei but generally believe that reconciliation with the West, including the U.S., is possible. Every Iranian President except Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Ebrahim Raisi has been a Moderate or a Reformer. Many Iranians (especially the hard-liners) consider Ayatollah Khamenei to be a Moderate.

- U.S. does not respect the Islamic identity of Iran.
- U.S. constantly interferes in Iran's affairs and will do anything to harm the Iranian government.
- Moderates believe they can alter the U.S.' perspective of Iran, and achieve normal relations while protecting Iran's interests.
- They are willing to engage with the U.S. to advance Iran's interests--a win-win for both countries (free market economy, eliminate Salafi extremists).
- The moderates were in control under President Hassan Rouhani but when President Trump withdrew from the nuclear agreement (JCPOA) many turned against the U.S. and the Council of Guardians has rejected almost every moderate political candidate since then.

**Reformers**—believe that the government should be modified, in principal if not in structure, to reduce the influence of the religious element and put more decision-making in the hands of elected officials. (former Presidents Abolhassan BaniSadr and Seyyed Mohammad Khatami,

Religious  
Leadership

Hardliners  
(Principlists)

Moderates

Reformers

Do not  
negotiate  
with the  
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Alter the  
West's  
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Reduce  
religious  
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government.

### **Potential negotiating points, 2015:**

- **Iran's goals:**
  - Security for Iran
  - Security for Shi'a in general
  - Removal of sanctions against their country
  - Regional political leadership
- **Iran's bargaining chips:**
  - Nuclear program
  - Peace

### **Areas of mutual interest:**

- **Sunni extremists.** Iran wants to see a stable Afghanistan with a government free of Taliban control. Sunni extremists like al Qaeda, the Taliban and ISIS are major threats to the lives of Shi'a throughout the region, particularly in Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. Iran, India, Russia and the U.S. all want to keep the Taliban and other Sunni extremists under control. Iran is a champion of the Hazara and Tajik minorities in Afghanistan in the face of Taliban oppression.
- **Drug trafficking.** Afghanistan is the world's largest source of illegally produced opioids. The Muslim Taliban, instead of suppressing the opium trade, relies in it for income. Cooperative counter-narcotics efforts would contribute to Iran's security and to world-wide drug control.
- **Water.** Tensions over scarce water resources could fuel instability between Iran and Afghanistan, as Afghan agriculture is expanding and is upstream from Iran's eastern provinces. The U.S. could be a mediator and provider of technology. Both narcotics control and water conservation are uncontroversial and nonpolitical.
- **Refugees.** Iran houses the second largest number of Afghan refugees after Pakistan. As economic conditions have worsened in Iran due to U.S. sanctions the Iranian population and government have turned on the refugees as a burden they cannot afford. Tehran has used the threat of mass deportation to put pressure on Kabul.

The United States could directly engage with Iran in bilateral discussions regarding Afghanistan, and pursue joint activities that would serve both of their interests and build much-needed trust. Trust, in turn, presents the opportunity to give Iran assurances regarding security, thus lessening their need to arm remote, Shi'a, nonstate actors like Hezbollah, Hamas, the PMUs and the Houthis.

### The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)

Signed in Vienna, Austria, July 14, 2015, by Iran, the U.S., France, England, Russia, China and Germany.

#### Iran:

- will never seek, develop or acquire nuclear weapons.
- can continue its nuclear power generation program. No existing power generation facilities will be dismantled.
- can maintain a stockpile of 300 Kilograms of 3.67% enriched uranium fuel.
  - will reduce its current 10,000 kilogram stockpile to this level (a 98% reduction).
- can continue enriching nuclear fuels, but must cut back its program:
  - can enrich to the 3.67% level, not the present 20% level.
  - Iran must reduce its current 19,000 operating centrifuges to 5,000 operating centrifuges at the Natanz facility, for the next ten years.
- can conduct research on more advanced (faster) centrifuges, and certain other research and development activities, but these activities will be limited for the next eight years.
- must remove all nuclear material from its Fordow facility for 15 years. Fordow will be converted into a nuclear physics and technology center.
- must rebuild the heavy water reactor at Arak to use 3.67% enriched fuel, and use that reactor for peaceful nuclear research and radioisotope production for medical and training purposes only.
- must not add any other heavy water reactors during the next 15 years.
- Iran will ship spent fuel outside its borders.
- Iranian students can study in nuclear fields.

These restrictions theoretically extended the time it would take for Iran to assemble a nuclear warhead to 1 year instead of the 2-3 months estimated in 2015.

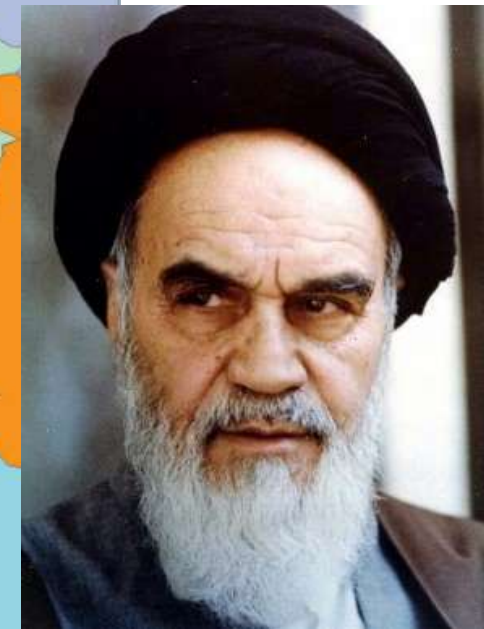
#### The U.S., U.N. and IAEA:

- will have intrusive inspections and verifications, as well as remote monitoring, 24/7.
- will have full time inspectors at Natanz, Fordow and Arak, who will:
  - have the right to inspect any nuclear facility in the country without asking for permission, except the Parchin facility which is located on a military base. (A separate agreement was reached with regard to access to Parchin—terms were not disclosed. It is not clear whether any other military bases are covered by the agreement.)
  - monitor uranium levels for 25 years.
  - monitor the number of centrifuges in use and in storage for 20 years.
  - maintain a longer term presence in Iran—details to be worked out.
- have snap-back sanctions. If we detect violations on Iran's part, U.S. can require EU, China, Russia and the others to resume sanctions.
- IAEA can track Iranian uranium from the time it leaves the mine.

## Today:

- Iran's nuclear program
- Hassan Rouhani and the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)
- Axis of Resistance
- Trump Sanctions
- Military Confrontation

Review



1979—The Islamic Republic of Iran is the first  
“Islamic state.”



U.S. Embassy employees held as hostages.



Desert One.





Robert McFarland and Oliver North, Tehran, 1986.



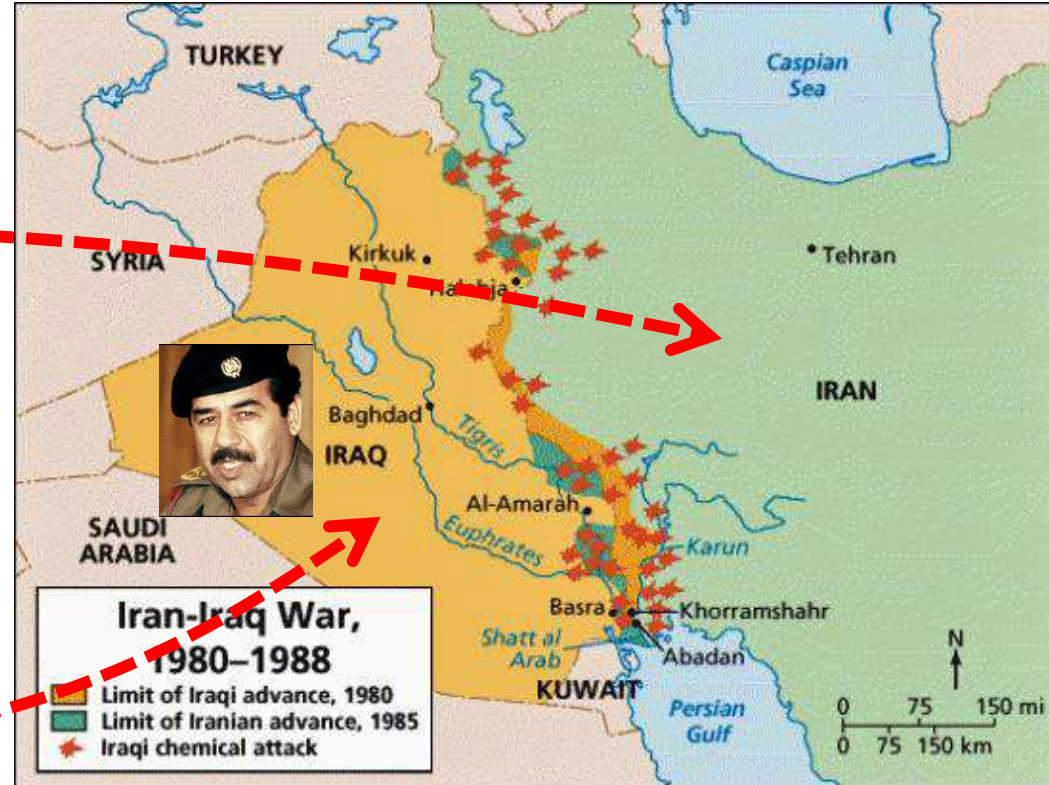
TOW anti-tank missile.



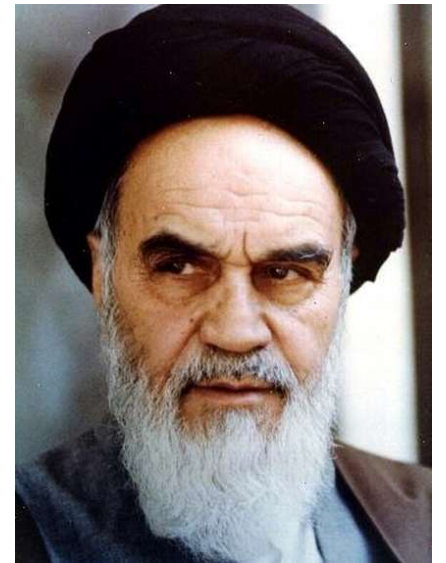
HAWK anti-aircraft missile.



Donald Rumsfeld and Saddam Hussein, Baghdad, 1983.



July 3, 1988 USS Vincennes shoots down Iran Air flight 655.  
290 killed.









Qassem  
Soleimani



Tabriz  
Urmia

Mashhad

Karaj  
Tehran

Kermanshah  
Qom

Isfahan  
Yazd

Ahwaz

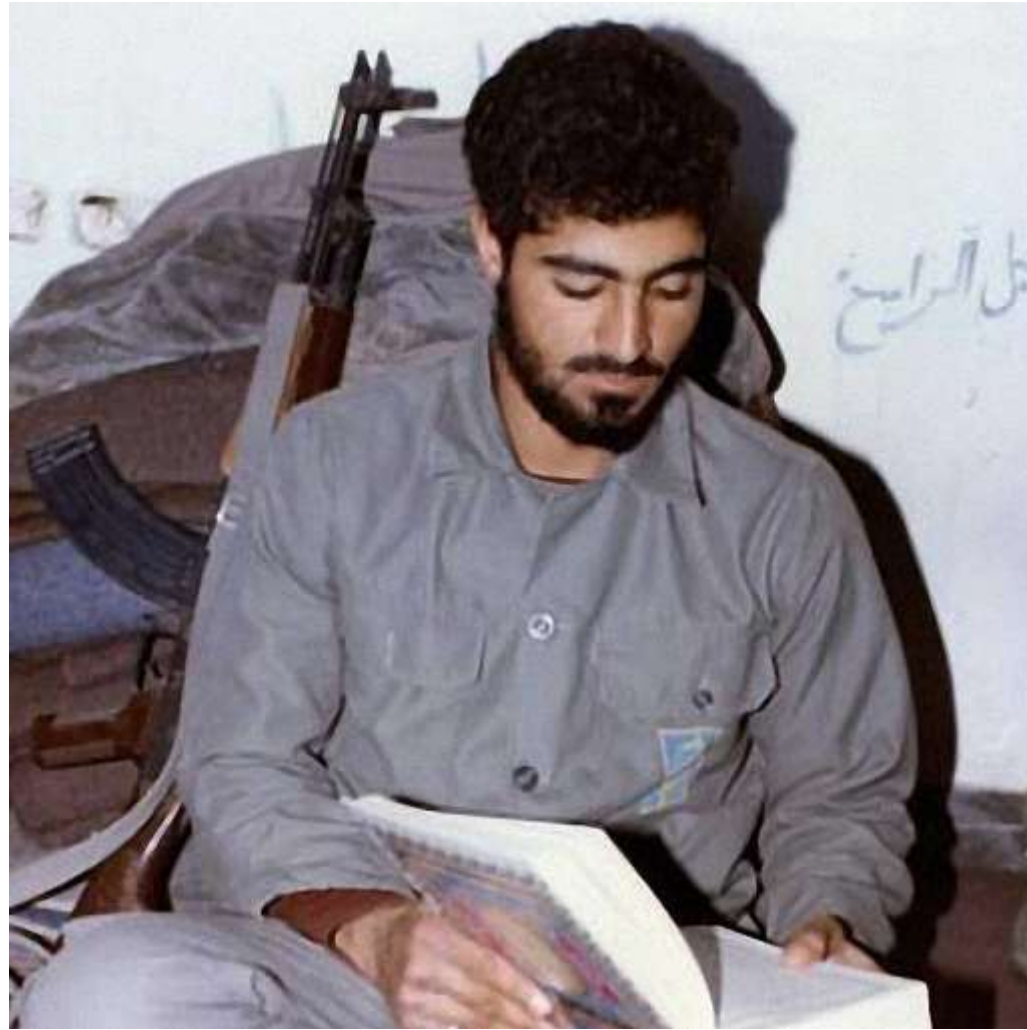
Shiraz

Rabor



Men and women in the streets in Tehran shout anti-Shah slogans during the second day of demonstrations against the Iranian monarch, Dec. 19, 1978.





Following the Iranian revolution, Soleimani joined the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC).







Khomeini sends 1,500 Republican Guards to Lebanon to organize and train a Shi'a militia.



1989, Taliban takes over Afghanistan



1989, Suleimani sent to Afghanistan frontier.



Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei was said to regard Qassem Suleimani as a son.

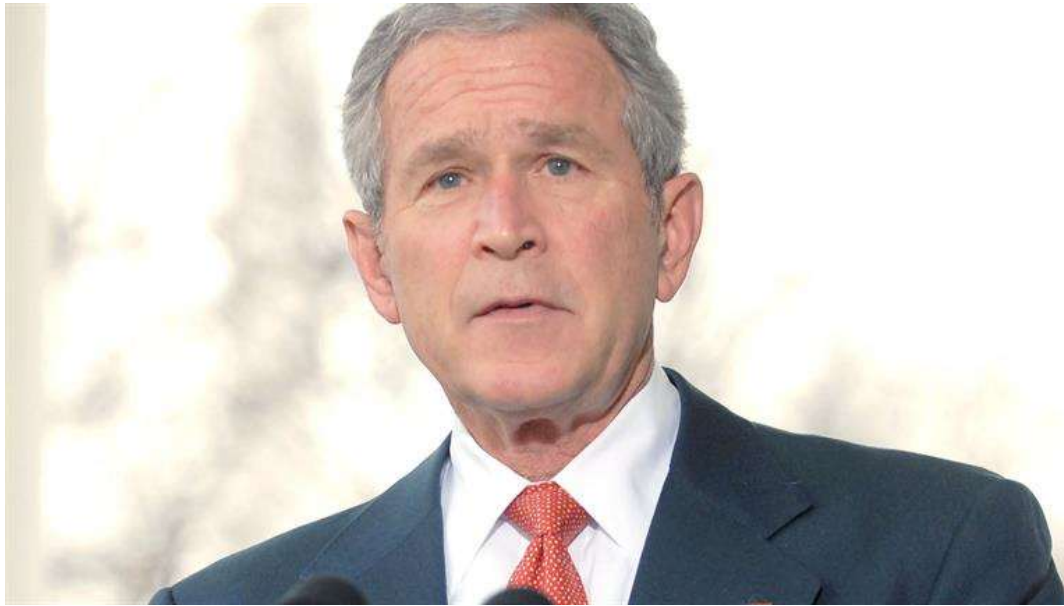




9/11 Attack on the World Trade Center



November 2001, Iran allows U.S. to use its airfields, port of Chabahar, to invade Afghanistan.



1/29/2002. George W. Bush declares that North Korea, Iraq and Iran constitute an “Axis of Evil.”



3/21/03. Neocons William Kristol, Richard Perle and Michael Ledeen say that Syria and Iran are next.



1980 – 2003 Saddam Hussein's Iraqi Army keeps Iran in check



2003 – 2011 US forces in Iraq keep Iran in check





Soleimani in Baghdad with Popular Mobilization Unit chiefs  
Abu Mahdi al Muhandis (Kata'ib Hezbollah) and Shebl al Zaydi (Imam Ali Brigade)



Major General Qassem Soleimani, Iran.



General David Petraeus, United States.

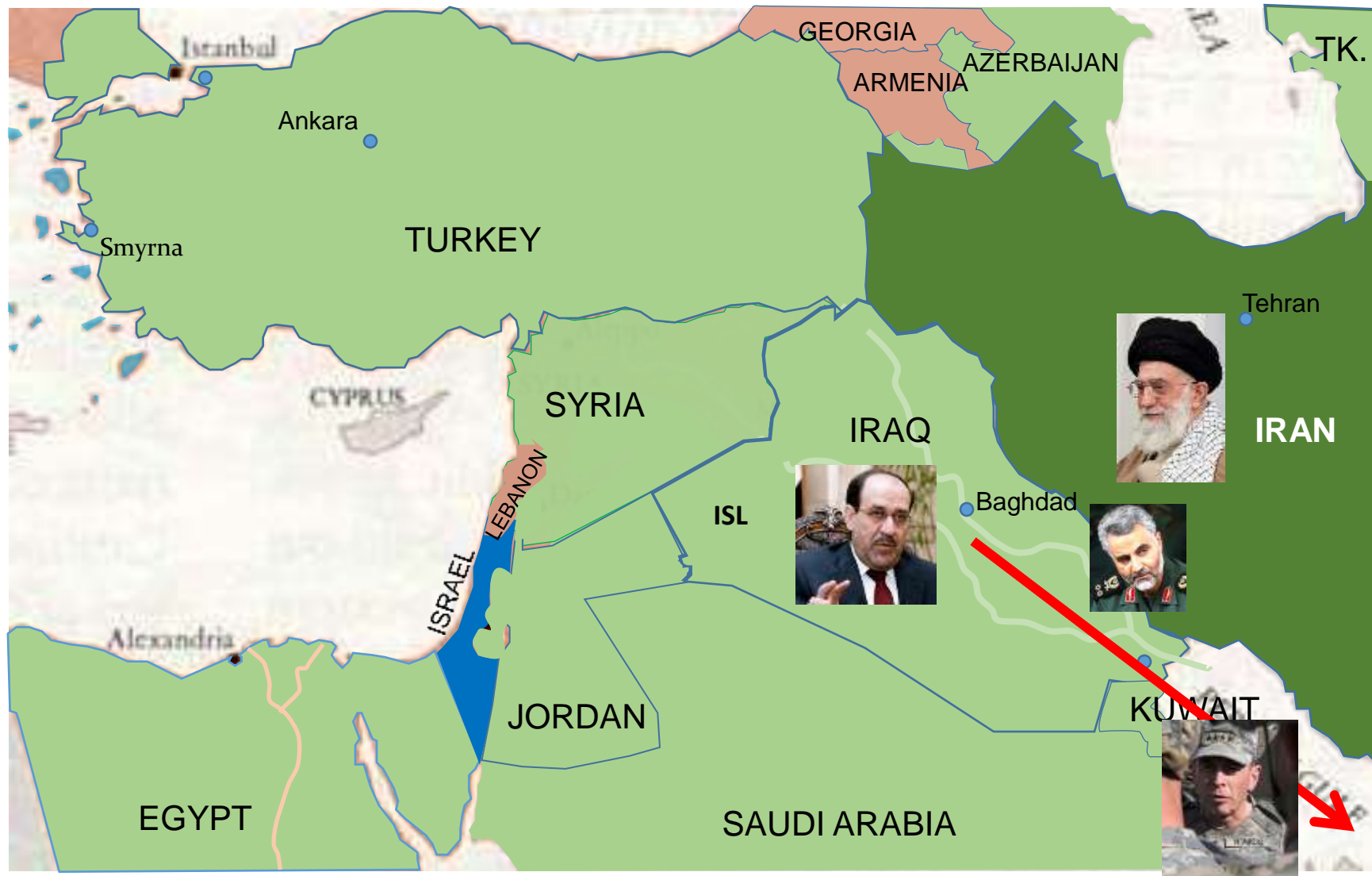
The world's top two experts on insurgency/counter-insurgency military operations.







2006-2010, Suleimani negotiates deals to make Nouri al-Maliki PM of Iraq.



Dec. 2011 US withdrawal leaves Nouri al Maliki to deal with Iran

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad



Mahmoud Ahmadinejad,  
President, 2005-2014



Mahmoud Ahmadinejad foreign relations, 2005





Hassan Nasrallah's Hezbollah is Iran's figurative "nuc" on Israel's northern doorstep.



Bashir al-Assad is an ally and provides transportation routes through Syria to Hezbollah.



Nouri al-Maliki is a friendly neighbor and transportation routes through Iraq.





Qasem Suleimani controls the Iraqi and Syrian Popular Mobilization Units (PMUs).

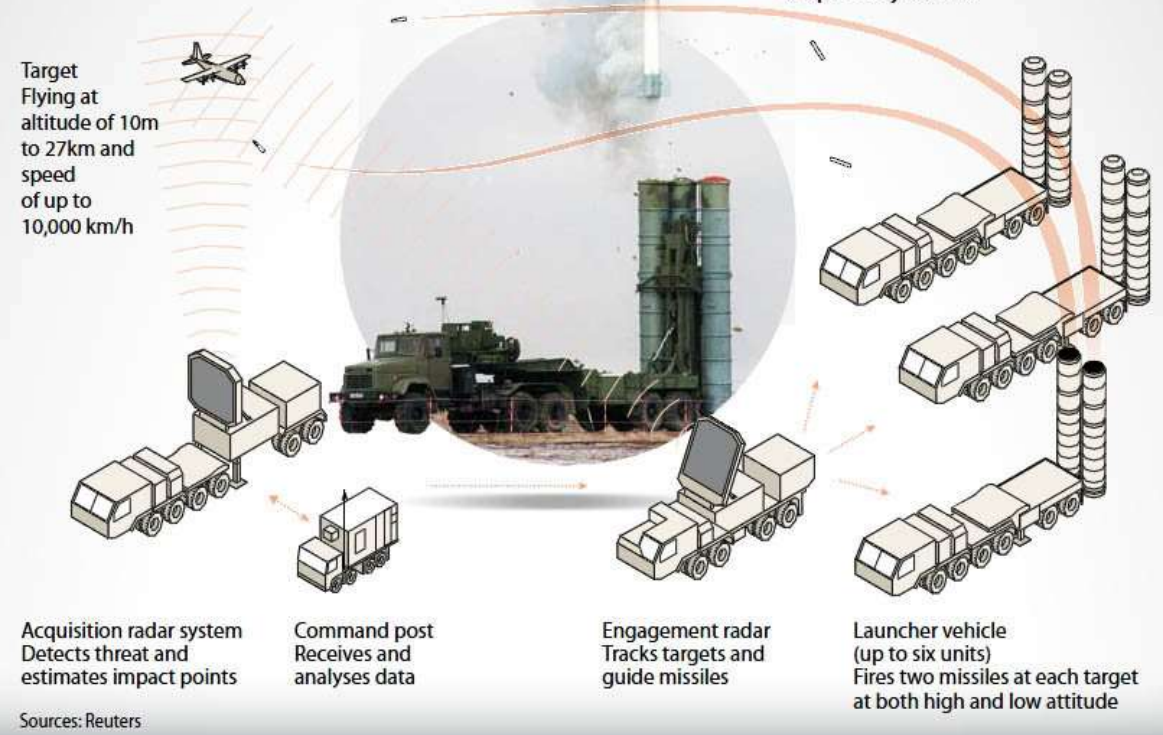


Islamic Jihad and Hamas are allies on Israel's southern doorstep

# RUSSIAN'S S-300 DEFENSE SYSTEM

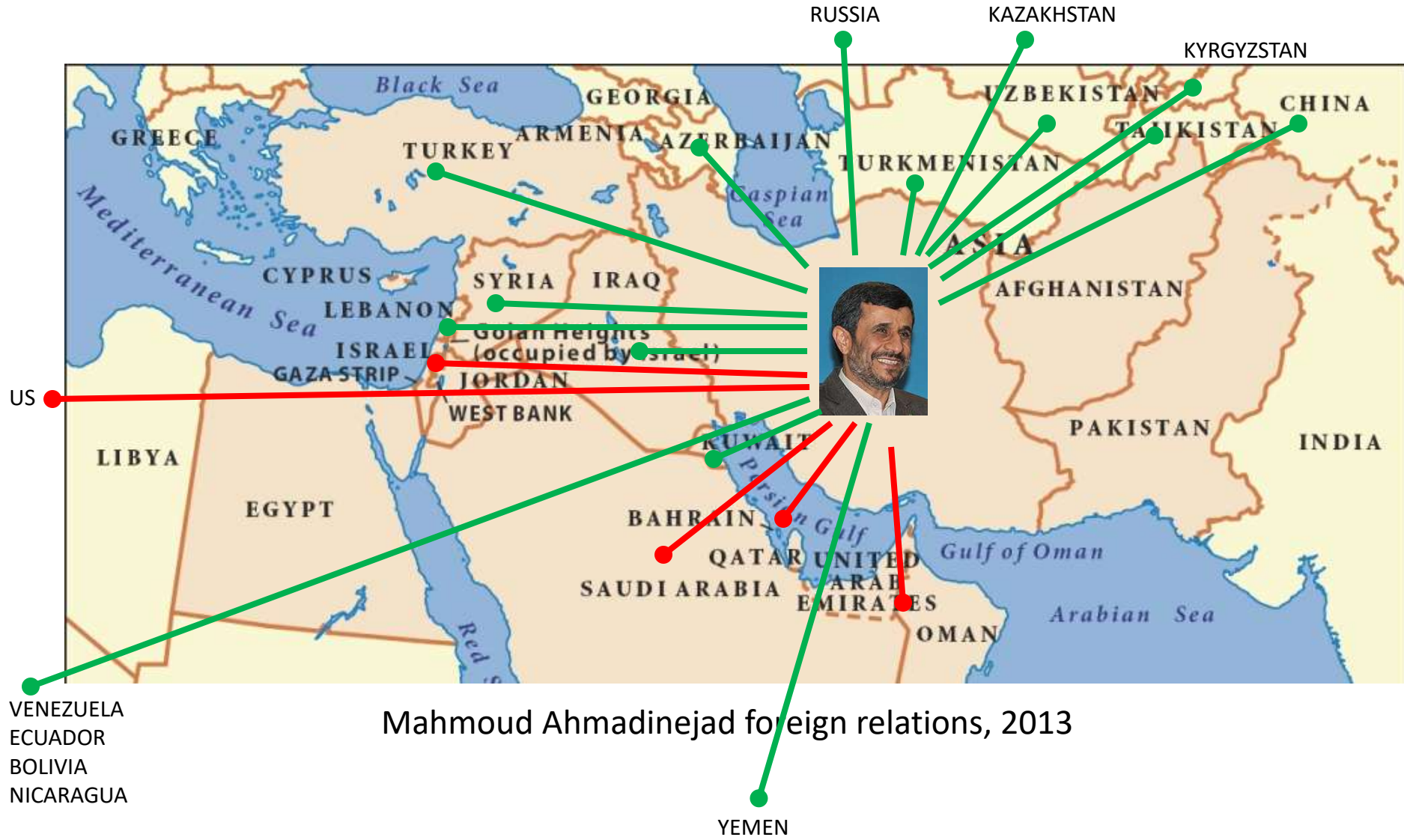
S-300 system components

How a typical S-300 air defense system works. Russia plans to deliver the system to Syria despite objections.

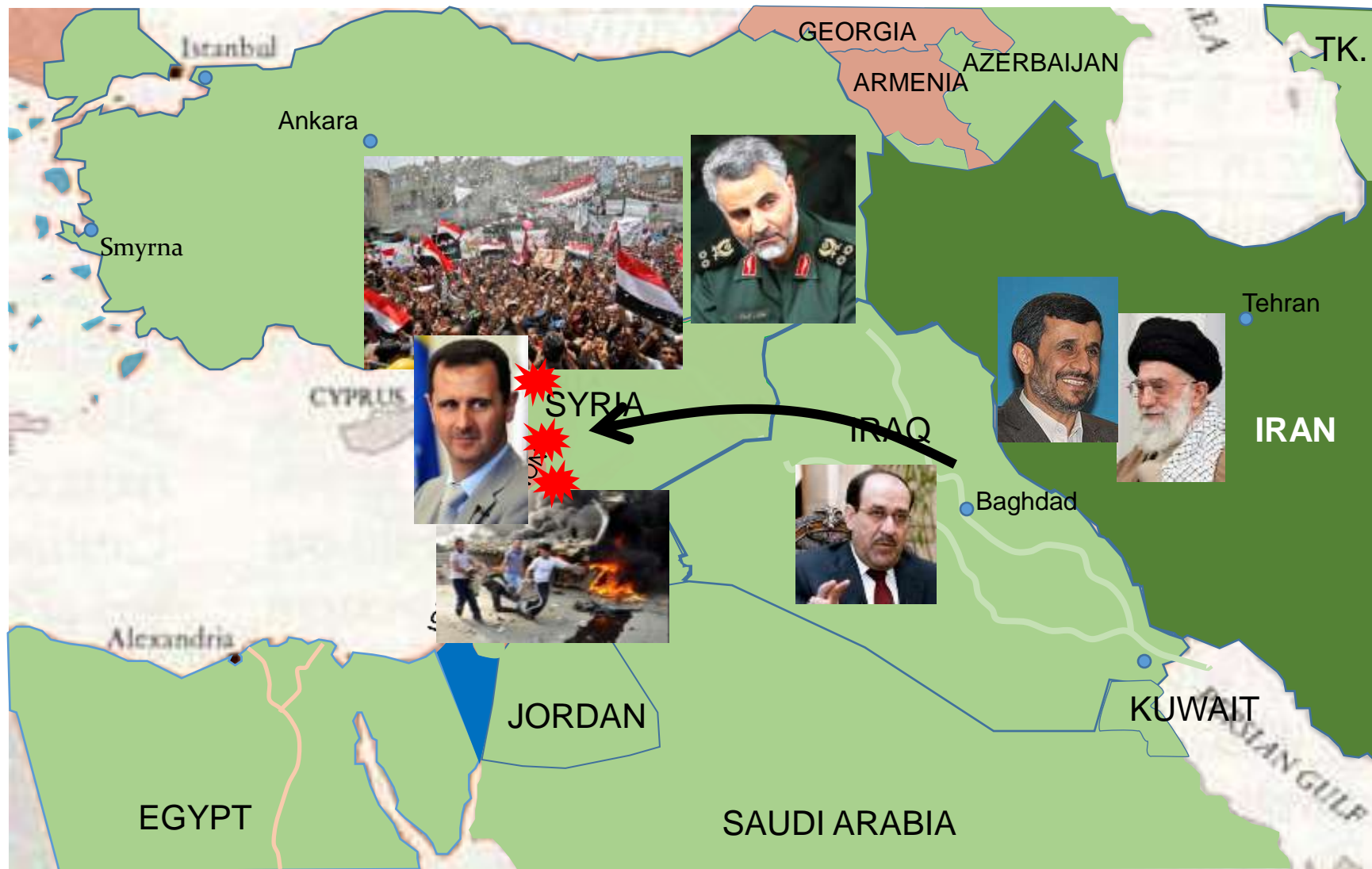


2007, Ahmadinejad orders Russian S-300 Air Defense System.





Mahmoud Ahmadinejad foreign relations, 2013

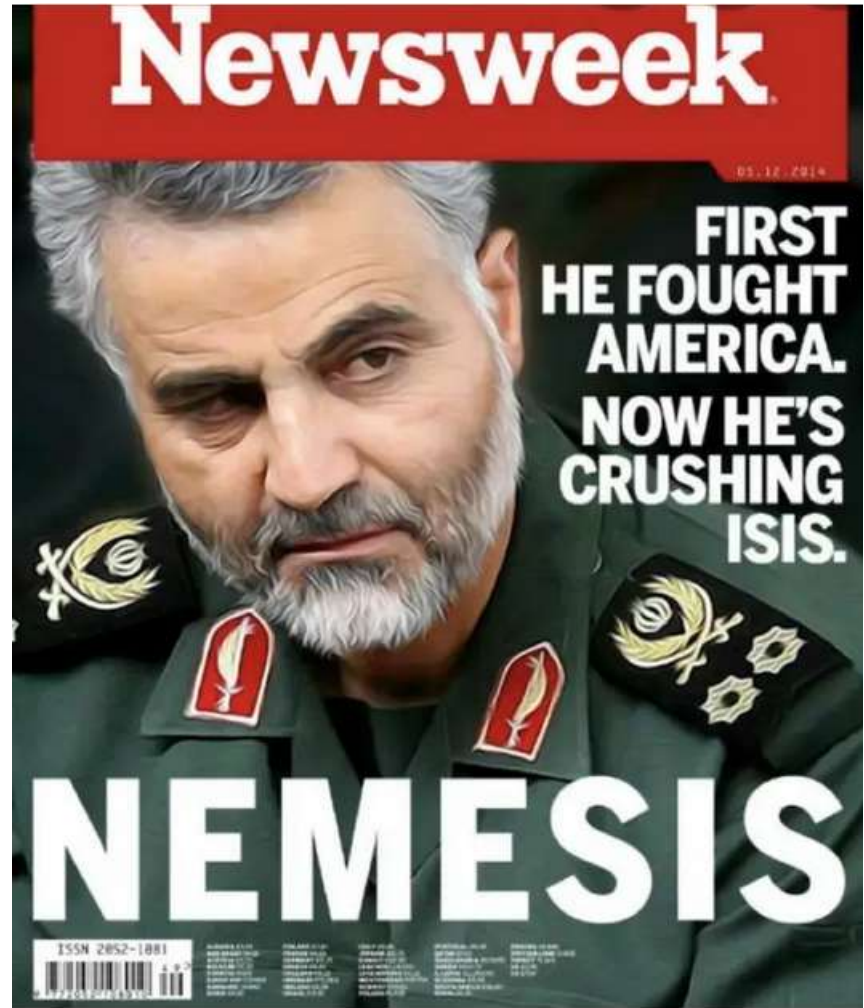


Summer 2011, Arab Spring demonstrations against Assad in Syria turn into open revolt. Suleimani brings in Iraqi militiamen led by Quds Force commanders to help.





Early 2013, Assad is still losing ground. Suleimani has Hezbollah attack and take rebel stronghold at Qusayr. Syrian army then takes the initiative in the Syrian Civil War.



Newsweek, May 12, 2014.



Iranian Quds Force  
Gen. Qassem Soleimani



ISIS fighter captured  
by Iraqi militiaman.



4/4/15. Shi'a militias (Popular Mobilization Units) liberate Tikrit.





General Qassem Soleimani, pictured in northern Iraq in May 2017.

# Nuclear developments





Iranian nuclear scientist Mostafa Ahmadi-Roshan killed by car bomb outside North Tehran University.



Siemens PLC CPU.

### Uranium enrichment:

- Natural uranium: 1% isotope U-235
- For medical use: 3.67%
- For research reactors: 20%
- For Weapons: 90-98%





Depiction of an Iranian uranium enrichment facility utilizing industrial centrifuges.





June, 2012. Talks begin in Oman, between representatives of President Barak Obama and President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.



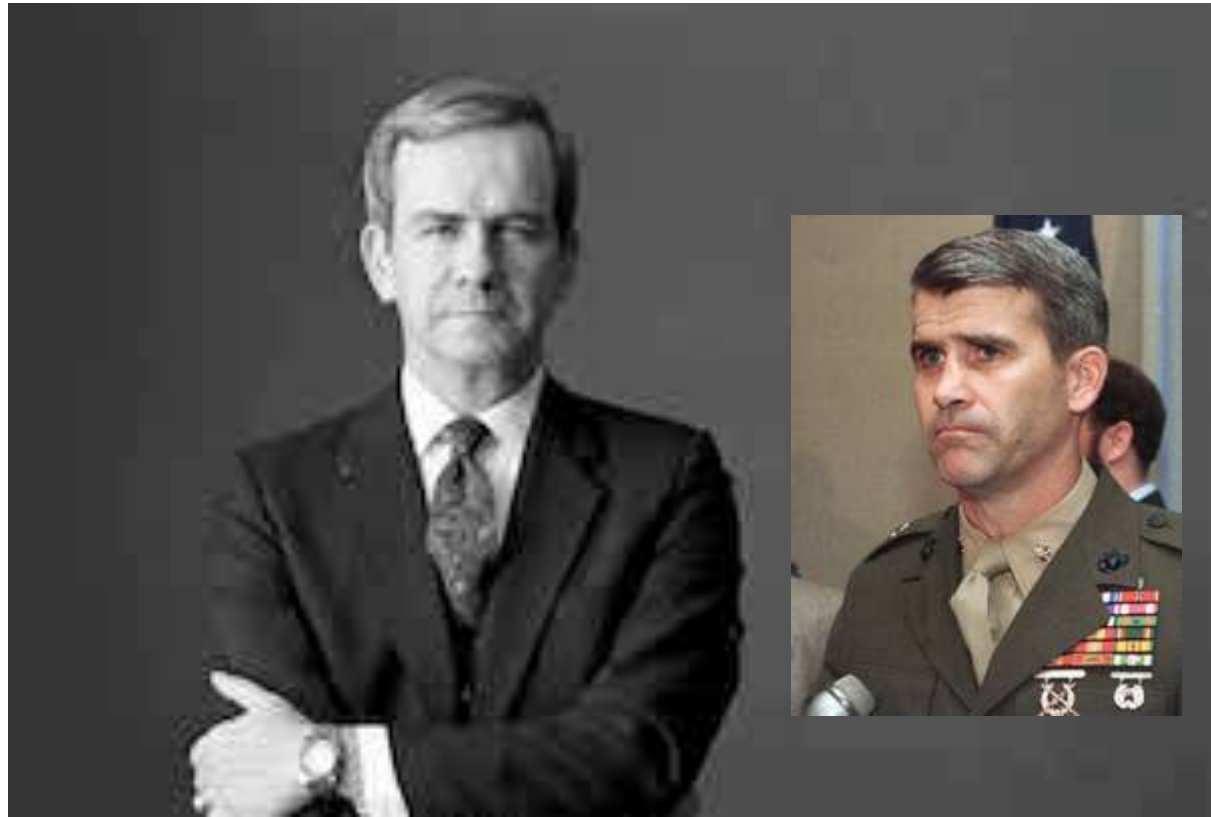
HASSAN ROUHANI



Hassan Rouhani as a teenager



Hassan Rouhani  
Commander of Iran's  
Joint Military Operations Center



Robert C. McFarlane  
President Reagan's  
National Security Advisor



Marine Lt. Col.  
Oliver North





May 7, 2013 Hassan Rouhani registers to run for President of Iran.



Rouhani's supporters celebrate his first presidential victory in Tehran.





Rouhani designated Mohammad Javad Zarif, an experienced Iranian diplomat, as Foreign Minister.



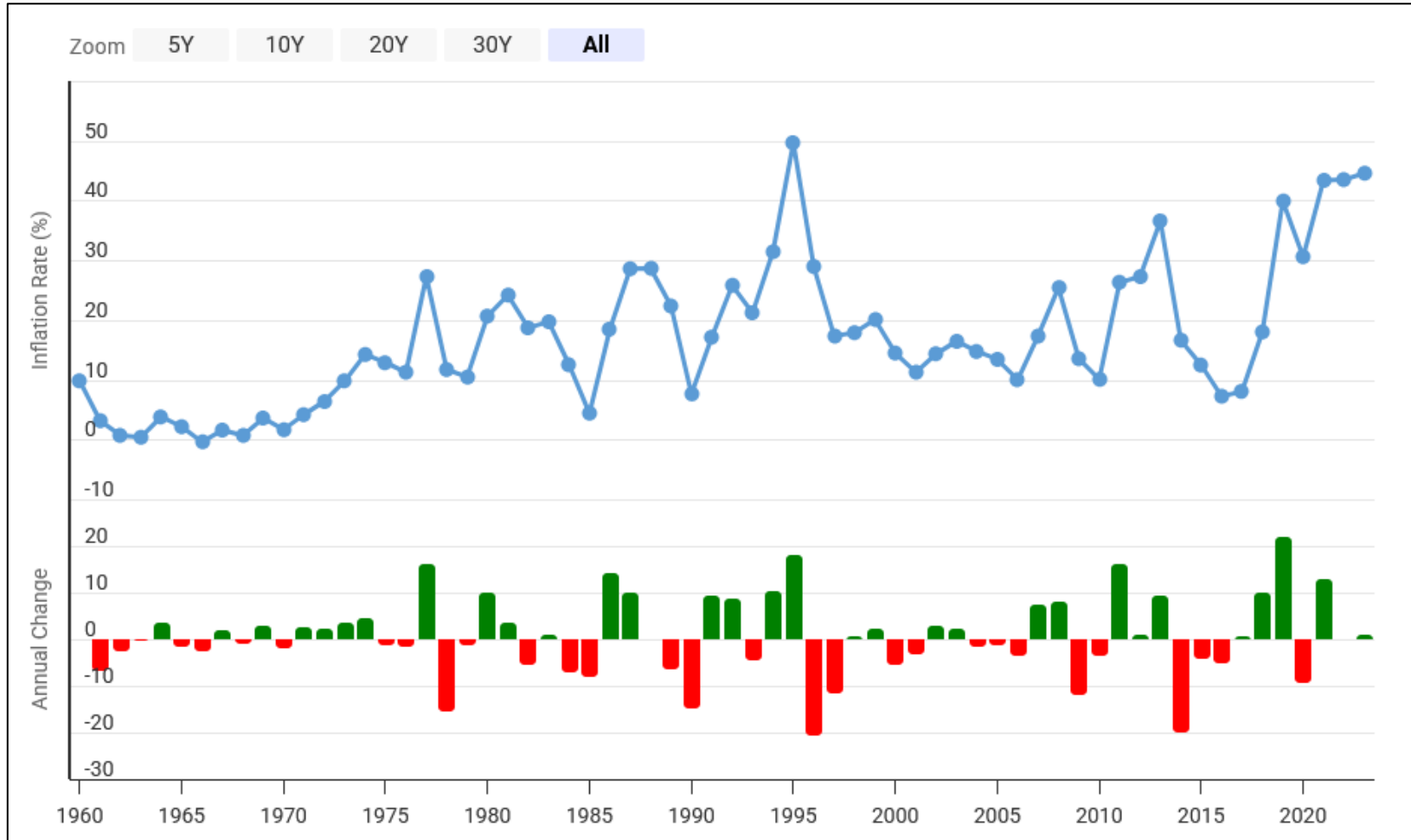




Construction at a standstill (2015).



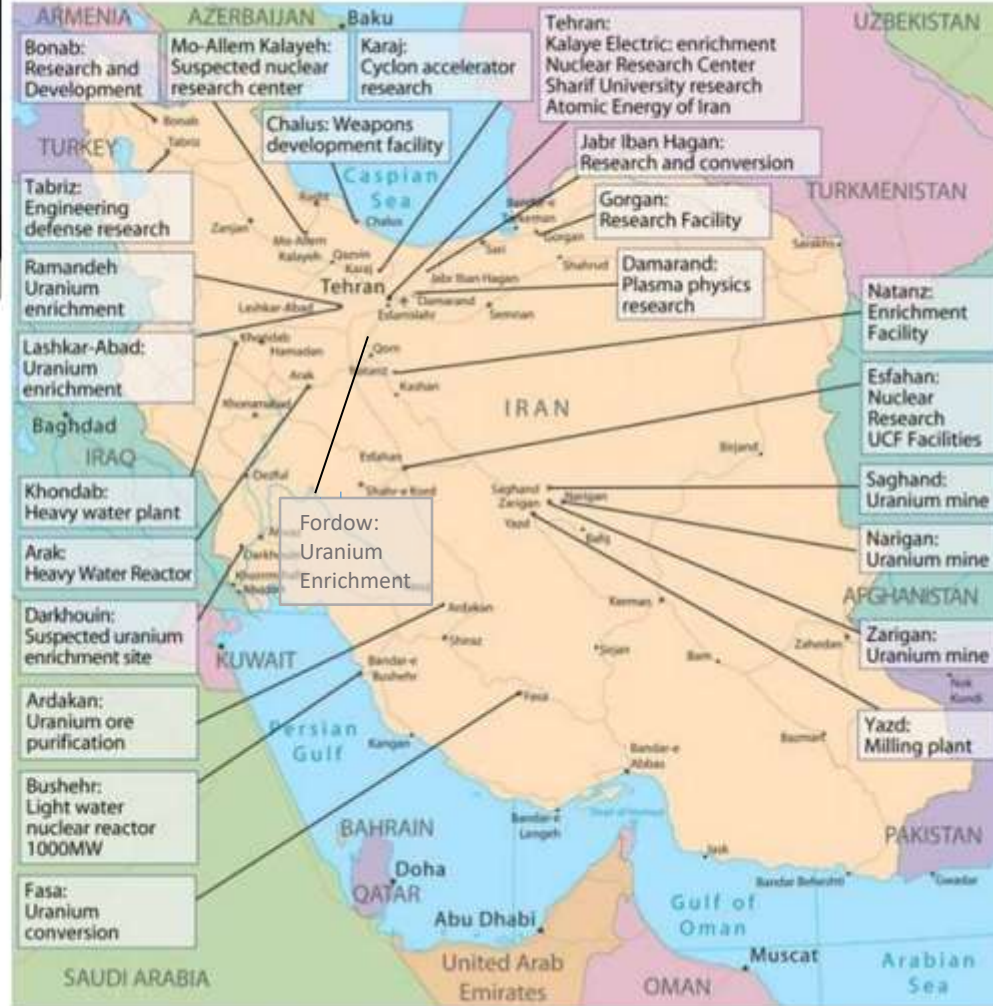
## Iran's inflation rate, year-to-year comparison:



# The Nuclear Deal



## Iran Nuclear Sites







Nov 2013. P5+1 Conference in Geneva negotiates interim nuclear deal for Iran.



Jan 20, 2014. IAEA inspectors (center) watch Iranian technicians disconnect 20% uranium production cascades at the Natanz nuclear facility.



P5+1 Conference in Vienna negotiates the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).







July 14, 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) (Iran Nuclear Deal) signed in Vienna.



### **Joint Comprehensive Plan Of Action (JCPOA):**

- Close Iran's weapons-capable nuclear reactors.
- Limits Iran's Nuclear program to power-generation and medical research levels—for ten years. To be monitored for 25 years.
- Ends the sanctions.
- Gives the West ten nuclear-free years to negotiate an end to Iran's external adventures.



Iran's Natanz nuclear facility.



Iran's Fordow nuclear facility.





Iran's Arak heavy water nuclear plant.





Ayatollah Khamenei speaks to students at Tehran University after the JCPOA is signed.



Annual commemoration of taking American hostages at the U.S. Embassy—Wednesday, Nov. 4, 2015.





May 2017, Hassan Rouhani re-elected overwhelmingly as President of Iran after negotiating the JCPOA.

# The Trump Sanctions



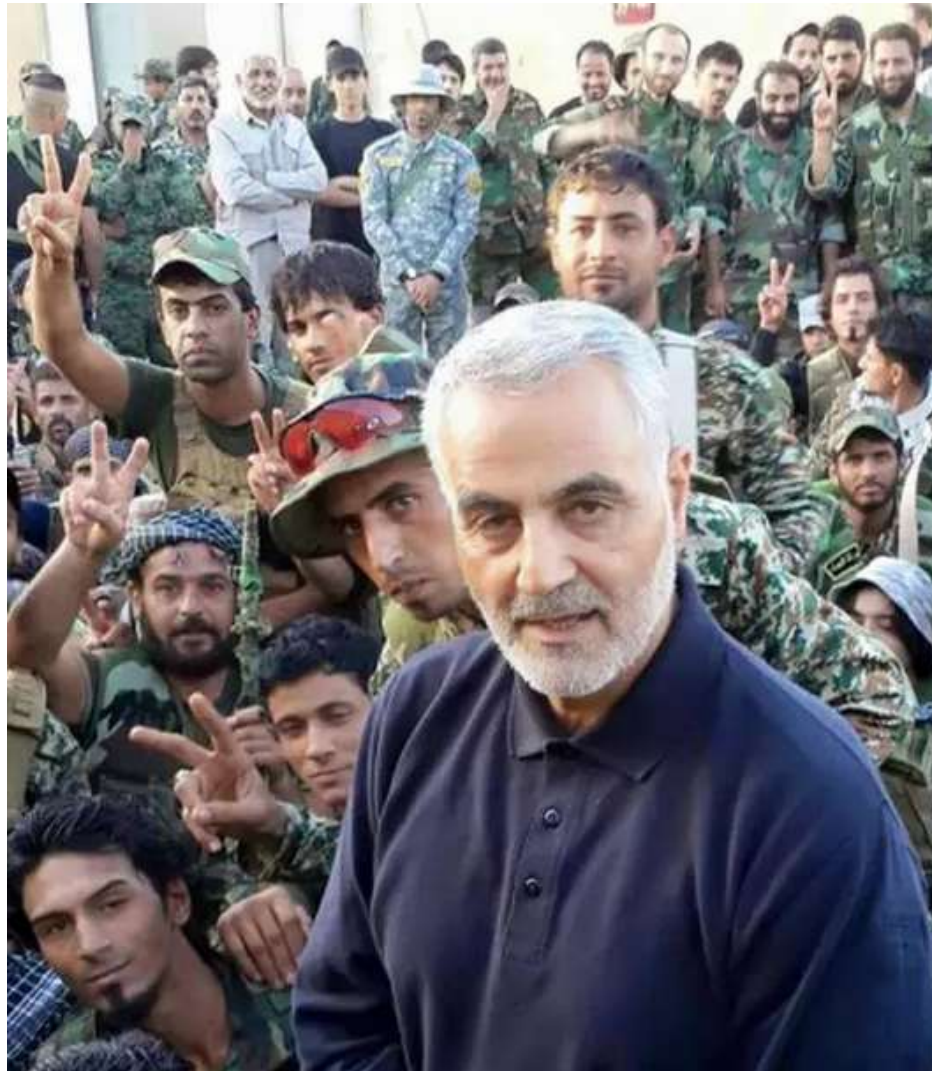


Donald Trump  
Elected President of the United States Nov. 8, 2017



1/10/20. U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin at a White House press conference.

# Military Confrontation



A CIA agent described Qassem Suleimani as “the most powerful operative in the Middle East today.”.





6/13/19, Kokuka Courageous ablaze in the Gulf of Oman.



9/15/19, drone and missile attack on Saudi Aramco facility.



Soleimani in Baghdad with Popular Mobilization Unit chiefs  
Abu Mahdi al Muhandis (Kata'ib Hezbollah) and Shebl al Zaydi (Imam Ali Brigade)



12/27/19, 30 rockets fired at U.S. K1 military base near Kirkuk, Iraq..





December 31, 2019 the US embassy in Baghdad is attacked by Kata'ib Hezbollah protesters who burn tires in front of the embassy.



TERMINALS

**Baghdad  
International  
Airport**

**Suleimani was in  
a vehicle struck  
by two missiles as  
his convoy exited  
the airport.**

AIRPORT ST.





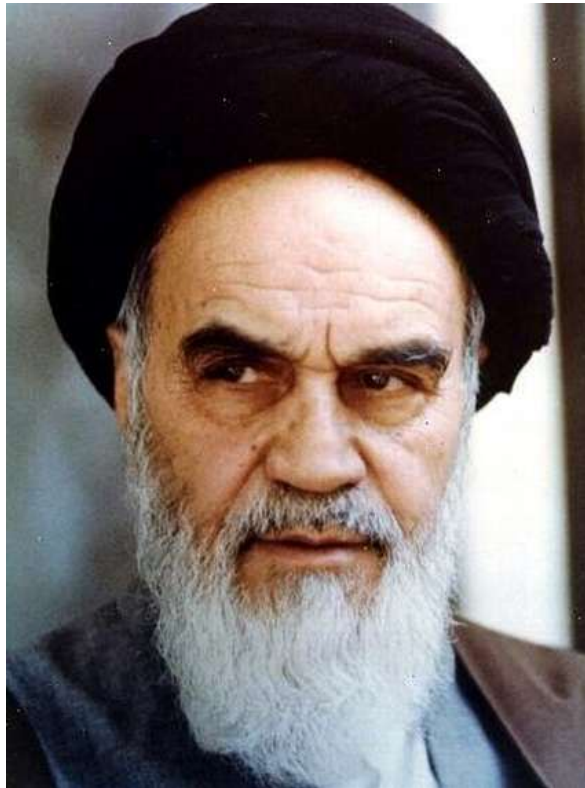




Flight 752



Remains of Ukraine Air flight 752 shot down by the IRGC on Jan 8, 2020. 179 killed.



Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini

# The Hard-liners





November 2019 protests, Isfahan.



1/11/20, protestors on Hafez Street, Tehran



February 2020 Parliamentary Elections. Iranian “Hard-liners” took over Parliament.





Ebrahim Raisi

Former Chief Justice of Iran's Supreme Court  
August 3, 2021, elected "Hard-Liner" President of Iran.



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