

Iran's regime has a track record of defeats

The problem with Iran's rulers is that they have come to rely on their expansionist foreign policies as the means for covering their internal failures.



Imaginary victories. An Iranian woman walks by a mural on the wall of the former US embassy in Tehran. (AFP)

In a speech three days before the second package of US sanctions went into effect, Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei reckoned that "America has been suffering defeats at the hands of Iran over the past four decades while the Islamic Republic of Iran has been victorious in those challenges."

Khamenei sees Washington's inability to reach Tehran as proof of its defeat. Such a position is representative of an ideological repertoire that is the only weapon the Iranian regime has to give itself a veneer of noble militancy.

The Iranian regime's main source of suffering is not US pressures but the historical failure to live up to the self-billing of four decades ago as a saviour that would transform Iranian people's fortunes from poverty to wealth. Unfortunately for the Iranians, their regime's policies have become a heavy affliction. They have taken to the streets in the millions in more than 50 cities over the past year to protest the government's impoverishing and corrupting policies.

Instead of uniting people, the Iranian regime caused unprecedented catastrophe by contributing directly to the creation of the biggest rift among Muslims in laying the foundations for sectarianism and encouraging it like no government has before.

Another historic defeat for the Iranian regime lies in its failure to build a solid economy to compete with capitalist and socialist economic systems and serve as an alternative. This was something the regime claimed it was doing since the victory of the Islamic Revolution but the result is something worse than the two systems. Iran's only option is to stand at the doors of Moscow, Beijing, Tokyo and the European Union and beg for help.

Another colossal failure of the Iranian regime is the great fraud perpetrated on Arabs and Muslims — the promise to liberate the Palestinians, rescue Jerusalem and defend the weak and the oppressed. As everyone can tell in this glorious era of Iranian victory and expansion, the Palestinian territories and Jerusalem are being lost to the Zionist entity at the same moment that the Iranian regime is marking an active presence along the Palestinian territories' borders in Gaza, Lebanon and southern Syria.

What is the use of all this Iranian might, which proved effective in protecting the Assad regime and suppressing, killing and displacing the Syrian people but proved incapable of dissuading Israel from taking steps to wipe out the idea of an Arab and Muslim Palestine?

Last, but not least, in the long list of the Iranian regime's defeats: It has never been serious or honest in confronting Washington. It didn't lift a finger when the United States entered the Arabian Gulf after the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait in 1990 nor was it bothered when the United States occupied Afghanistan and Iraq. On the contrary, Teheran was very happy to coordinate with Washington in the execution of those operations.

It is seeking Oman's help for a rapprochement with Israel and its ideological pride has miraculously disappeared as an official Iranian delegation participates alongside an Israeli delegation in an economic conference in Doha. This is the same regime whose proxy militias in the Arab world would never miss a chance to jump at the throat of any Arab official who dared to come near someone with an Israeli identity.

Referring to an Iranian victory may be true but certainly not over the United States. The latter has reaped the beneficial consequences of Iranian policies.

If there is some Iranian victory, it must be over Arab countries, not the regimes per se but the Arab societies that have been destroyed by Iranian meddling. The Iranian regime has accomplished what Israel had failed to do. Without the destructive and eroding power of the Iranian machine in the Arab world, Israel would have never been able to gobble up Jerusalem.

At no time has the aim of the US sanctions and US policy towards Iran been to topple the Iranian regime. Washington and US analysts say that the aim is simply to change the behaviour of the Iranian regime and impose measures for

monitoring Iran's peaceful nuclear project. This is quite understandable because Iran has never been a hindrance to a greater US influence in the Middle East. On the contrary, it has always been instrumental in strengthening this influence.

In the long term, US strategies for the region and the sanctions imposed are part of a transition phase to a new stage in the Middle East. Thanks primarily to Iranian interventions, the Arab regional system has been largely disabled. Iran has planted the seeds of sectarian strife in Arab societies, weakening them in the process and now its mission is complete.

It's not the case that the United States does not want to reward Iran for a job well done; it's more the case that it wants the Iranian leadership to adapt to the requirements of a phase during which Washington rearranges and rebuilds the region on new bases where militias no longer play the leading role.

The problem with Iran's rulers, however, is that they have come to rely on their expansionist foreign policies and the implantation of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps in the Arab world as the means for covering their internal failures on the economic, developmental and social levels.

Had the primary function and purpose of the Iranian regime's ideology and power not been the destruction and weakening of the Arab countries and had Tehran truly stood up to Western and Israeli hegemony, in addition to seeking the well-being of the Iranian people, it would have been possible to speak about a genuine Iranian victory over the United States.

That, however, has not been the case for decades and the Iranian regime will never triumph over the United States simply because its presumed victories were achieved thanks to America's help. Who's going to help it now?



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