

**CAN THE WEST TRUST IRAN ...
AS IT FUNDS AND ASSISTS TERRORIST GROUPS ?**

It might seem incongruous to right-minded people that while the P5+1 – Great Britain, The Russian Federation, the People's Republic of China, The French Republic and The Federal Republic of Germany – sit down with senior officials of The Islamic Republic of Iran with a view to nut out an agreement with regard to Iran's nuclear ambitions – for peaceful purposes, only, one has been told, repeatedly – the powers that be in Iran maintain, either by innuendo or covert acts, that it has the right to assist certain terrorist groups.

Next week, Iran will hold technical talks with the P5+1 in Vienna, Austria. These talks are aimed at arriving at a comprehensive agreement with regard to Iran's avowed determination to be able, by signing an international accord, to enrich uranium for peaceful purposes, such as nuclear-powered, generating stations and the like.

These talks are scheduled to last for three days with Iran's nuclear negotiator, Mr Abbas Araqchi, leading the Iranian-Government's team.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has gone on record, stating, inter alia, that as far as the Jewish state is concerned, that which Iran really wants to achieve is to acquire the necessary wherewithal to become a nuclear-armed country.

Last Sunday (February 23, 2014), The Islamic Republic News Agency (**IRNA**), the official news agency of The Islamic Republic of Iran, a government-funded and controlled news agency, under the aegis of the Iranian Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, quoted Mr Abbas Araqchi as stating:

*'Expert-level negotiations between Iran and the P5+1 group will be held next week on the sidelines of the **IAEA** (International Atomic Energy Agency) Board of Governors meeting.'*

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has, also, voiced his, and his country's concern, in respect of the progress of the talks between the world powers and Iran.

The Prime Minister is quoted as having stated:

'Iran, in fact, is getting everything and giving virtually nothing.'

He went on to say:

'I view with concern the fact that Iran believes that it will realise its plan to become a threshold nuclear state with an enrichment capacity that it thinks cannot be touched, with the ability to develop both nuclear weapons and inter-continental missiles, which it is continuing to work on unhindered.'

While Iran talks of '*peace in our time*' – the September 30, 1938, statement, uttered by British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain in his speech, concerning the Munich Agreement and the Anglo-German Declaration – in The Syrian Arab Republic, President Hafez Bashar al-Assad is licking his lips, following confirmation of a further shipment of munitions and equipment from Russia.

And, from Iran, President Hafez Bashar al-Assad is warmed by the knowledge that this theocratic government continues to spend billions of US dollars in propping up his regime in its war against the widespread insurgency in the country where tens of thousands of innocent women and children have been killed and maimed by the fighting that has been raging for more than 48 months.

Iranian military personnel is in Syria and more and more military personnel are coming as the months pass, with military specialists, giving advice to Syria on ways and means to win its struggle, if not by force of arms, then by attrition.

Iran has persuaded Hezbollah to send its fighters from Lebanon and to stand, side by side, with the loyal soldiers of the Syrian Army.

Hezbollah and Hamas – Hamas, being the militant Palestinian Islamic Government of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, dedicated to the destruction of the State of Israel – are both considered terrorist entities by the West, but it is known that Iran is bankrolling both organisations, directly or indirectly, overtly or covertly.

Iran is known to support Islamic religious movements – as long as it suits its purposes.

It is well accepted that Iran sees the survival of the Assad Regime as being important for the well-being of its own regime.

Hence, it supplies Syria with the tools of war in the hope of aiding its ‘ally’.

Are the Talks Doomed to Failure?

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has gone on record as stating, in very definitive terms, that he is not optimistic about upcoming nuclear talks with the world powers, but, by the same token, he was not opposed to the talks.

On Monday, February 17, 2014, he said:

‘What our foreign ministry and officials have started will continue and Iran will not violate its (pledge) ... but I say again that this is of no use and will not lead anywhere.’

Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei is the final arbiter in all matters political in Iran: No Iranian politician would dare to question his absolute authority; no medium in the country would dare to publish anything that could be construed as being contrary to the utterances of the Supreme Leader; no Iranian citizen would dare, publicly, to suggest a contrary opinion to that of the Supreme Leader.

Violations of the unwritten law of the land are met with immediate and crushingly overpowering force.

Of late, the deployment of some senior commanders of the elite Iranian Quds Force, an arm of the **Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)**, has entered Syria along with hundreds of IRGC personnel.

Actually, this is hardly cause for concern because, even prior to the present situation, Iran had stationed between 2,000 and 3,000 hardline officers of the IRGC in Syria.

The stated aim of this force was to train Syrian troops and to keep the supply lines open for arms and cash to be funnelled to Lebanon.

The function of this latest addition to the Iranian military force that has entered Syria is not to take part in the fray between the military forces of President Hafez Bashar al-Assad and the insurgents, but to assist in gathering intelligence and to advise as to what action to take, given a certain set of circumstances.

The official, Iranian Foreign Ministry bumph has been spelled out on a number of occasions:

‘We (Iran) always have said that we support our Syrian brothers and respect their will ... but

Iran has never been involved in Syria by providing arms or financially or by sending troops.'

Unfortunately for the Iranian Foreign Ministry, recently certain Iranian officials have confirmed the existence of bands of Iranian militia, involved in being very active with members of the Syrian Army.

A retired IRGC commander has confirmed the existence of Iranian forces on the ground in Syria and senior Quds force commanders, numbering not less than 60, are engaged in various duties with President Hafez Bashar al-Assad's forces.

This commander, also, stated that thousands of Iranian paramilitary Basij volunteer fighters have joined the ranks of the Syrian Army.

As for the existence of IRGC commanders, having been active in Syria, it is difficult to deny – because two such commanders have, only recently, been killed on the battlefield; and, these deaths have been publicly reported.

US officials have gone on record, confirming the existence of Iranian presence in Syria and, in some cases, even commanding Syrian Government forces.

According to statements, emanating from official US sources:

'Iran's presence in Syria has been and remains a concern given the resources Tehran has at its disposal and its unwavering support for the Assad Regime.'

In the words of the 16th President of The United States of America:

'You can fool all the people some of the time, and some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time.'

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