



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on July 31, 2018

Trump: I'll Meet With Iranians

After a tense day or two in which threats of utter destruction were hurled between the United States and Iran, it appears that the countdown to what Iran warned would be the “mother of all wars” has passed.

President Trump has said he would be happy to meet with his Iranian counterpart anytime.

And although Iran's foreign ministry said “no” to such a meeting given Trump's hostility, an ally of President Hassan Rouhani said peace is possible if the United States returns to the [multi-nation deal that restricted](#) what Iran can do with its nuclear facilities.



The relative calm followed a few days during which Trump and the Iranians threatened mutual destruction.

Trump Will Meet

[Trump offered](#) to meet during a news conference with the Italy's prime minister, Giuseppe Conti.

Asked whether he was prepared to meet with Rouhani and “under what conditions,” Trump said “I'll meet with anybody. I believe in meeting.... The Prime Minister said it better than anybody can say it: Speaking to other people, especially when you're talking about potentials of war and death and famine and lots of other things — you meet. There's nothing wrong with meeting.”

Noting his meeting with Russia's Vladimir Putin in Helsinki, Trump said “I believe in meeting. I would certainly meet with Iran if they wanted to meet. I don't know that they're ready yet. They're having a hard time right now.... But I ended the Iran deal; it was a ridiculous deal. I do believe that they will probably end up wanting to meet, and I'm ready to meet any time they want to. And I don't do that from strength or from weakness. I think it's an appropriate thing to do. If we could work something out that's meaningful, not the waste of paper that the other deal was, I would certainly be willing to meet.”

Trump said he had “no preconditions”:

No preconditions. No. If they want to meet, I'll meet. Anytime they want.... It's good for the country, good for them, good for us, and good for the world. No preconditions. If they want to meet, I'll meet.”

But [according to the New York Times](#), quoting Iranian Foreign Minister Bahram Qassemi, a U.S.-Iranian confabulation probably won't happen: “With current America and these policies, there will definitely not be the possibility of dialogue and engagement, and the United States has shown that it is totally unreliable,” Qassemi said.

Given the American repudiation of the six-nation nuclear agreement and the restored sanctions, “I think there are no conditions for such a discussion at all,” he said.



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Threats Exchanged

The latest exchange began when [Rouhani warned Trump](#) to stop inflaming tensions, even threatening [to shut down oil exports](#) through the Straits of Hormuz.

After [Trump pulled out](#) of the nuclear deal, he imposed new sanctions on Iran, and [threatened sanctions on countries that import Iranian oil](#).

“Don’t play with the lion’s tail, this would only lead to regret,” [Rouhani warned](#). “America should know that peace with Iran is the mother of all peace, and war with Iran is the mother of all wars.”

Rouhani’s “mother of all wars” warning was similar to Iraqi dictator [Saddam Hussein’s vow](#) in 1991 to fight the “mother of all battles” against the United States. The “mother of all battles” lasted 42 days.

[Trump answered Rouhani](#) with an all caps tweet:

To Iranian President Rouhani: NEVER, EVER THREATEN THE UNITED STATES AGAIN OR YOU WILL SUFFER CONSEQUENCES THE LIKES OF WHICH FEW THROUGHOUT HISTORY HAVE EVER SUFFERED BEFORE. WE ARE NO LONGER A COUNTRY THAT WILL STAND FOR YOUR DEMENTED WORDS OF VIOLENCE & DEATH. BE CAUTIOUS!

After that, the [Express reported](#), Major General Qassem Soleimani, chieftain of the Iranian Quds Force of the Revolutionary Guard Corps, threatened to destroy everything the president owned.

Said Soleimani, “As a soldier, it is my duty to respond to Trump’s threats. If he wants to use the language of threat, he should talk to me, not to president Hassan Rouhani.” Soleimani continued, speaking to President Trump, “You know that this war will destroy all that you possess. You will start this war but we will be the ones to impose its end. Therefore you have to be careful about insulting the Iranian people and the president of our Republic.”

[He also said](#) he might already have positioned terrorists in the United States: “Mr Gambler Trump! I’m telling you that we are close to you exactly where you wouldn’t think that we are.”

Meeting Possible, Lawsuit Filed

Despite these exchanges, [Reuters reported](#), an ally close to the Iranian president has said a more conciliatory Trump might get a meeting.

“Respecting the Iranian nation’s rights, reducing hostilities and returning to the nuclear deal are steps that can be taken to pave the bumpy road of talks between Iran and America,” tweeted Hamid Aboutalebi, an advisor to Rouhani.

In June, [Iran sued](#) the United States in the International Court of Justice to stop the economic sanctions that are crippling the country’s economy. The lawsuit seeks compensatory monetary damages.

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