

Calm region detrimental to UK-France lucrative contracts

From page 1 ▶ After Macron's meeting with MBZ, France announced that a 16 billion-euro deal has been signed with the UAE for the sale of 80 Rafale warplanes.

The UAE intends to use these warplanes to replace Mirage 2000 fleet.

Political experts referred to the deal as "mega-contract".

After his visit to the UAE and Qatar, Macron went to Saudi Arabia to visit another so-called influential actor in the region, MBS.

Mohammad Bin Salman is one of the frontrunners in opposing the Vienna talks intended to remove the brutal sanctions the United States has imposed on Iran.

Saudi Arabia and the UAE have both stated that a return to the JCPOA is impossible without their involvement in the process.

Macron is the first Western leader to meet with bin Salman in Saudi Arabia since Saudi writer Jamal Khashoggi was mutilated inside Riyadh's consulate in Istanbul in 2018.

The French president is very keen on building ties with the Persian Gulf countries, especially since the withdrawal of the United States from

Afghanistan, and an imminent withdrawal from Iraq. Yet, this interest is not limited to just France. The United Kingdom is also interested in the famous policy of "create a division, then rule."

These visits are -on paper- intended to de-escalate tensions in the region, yet, they do not seem so. During his visit to the UAE, Macron prematurely announced the failure of the Vienna talks. He even went so far to suggest that the parties won't be reconvening in Vienna soon. These remarks won't certainly help stabilizing the region.

In that regard, Abdullah bin Zayed, the UAE's Foreign Minister visited the United Kingdom in October. During the visit, he met with his British counterpart, Liz Truss.

These mutual visits have only worsened the situation in West Asia. Saudis have intensified their raids against Yemen, Lebanon is in a bad shape, and the European troika is jeopardizing a possible agreement with Iran for economic interests.

Tahnoun Bin Zayed, the UAE National Security Advisor and MBZ's right hand man, visits Iran on Monday. If the UAE wishes to restore relations with Iran, it is advised not to fall in such traps.

America's arrogance is causing more troubles to the Vienna negotiations

By Hongda Fan

The seventh round of the Vienna negotiations on lifting sanctions against Iran and fully resuming implementation of the JCPOA was temporarily suspended on December 3. It seems that Iran and the United States have different views on how to face the results of the first six rounds of negotiations. In this regard, European negotiators are on the side of the United States.

Iran believes that since the outcome of the first six rounds of negotiations is a draft, there is still room for further negotiations; The United States and Europe believe that new negotiations should proceed directly from the results of the previous six rounds of negotiations.

Iran's chief negotiator and Deputy Foreign Minister Ali Bagheri Kani said that Iran has put forward two proposals to other negotiators on lifting sanctions against Iran and the Iranian nuclear issue. According to Bagheri, if these two proposals based on the spirit of the JCPOA are recognized, Iran will provide a third proposal.

However, the United States and the three European countries do not agree with the first two proposals provided by Iran, and are very dissatisfied with Iran's changes to some matters reached in the first six rounds of negotiations. U.S. Secretary of state Blinken blamed Iran for the failure of this round of the Vienna negotiation, and accused Iran of being insincere.

In fact, Iran sent a delegation of up to 40 people with Deputy Foreign Minister Bagheri as the chief negotiator, including experts in oil, banking, economy, law, trade, commerce and other fields, as well as several senior officials at the vice-ministerial level. In Bagheri's words, Iran came to Vienna with sincerity.

However, Iran and the United States obviously have major differences in their expectations for this round of the Vienna negotiations. Iran stressed that the United States should lift sanctions and Iran's nuclear rights should be respected. Bagheri emphasized in a commentary in the Financial Times that Iran's first goal is to "complete, guarantee and verify the sanctions imposed on the Iranian people."

The most important thing for the U.S. delegation is that Iran should fully implement the JCPOA, immediately stop its nuclear development and return to the initial level stipulated in the nuclear deal. President Biden made it clear at the end of October that the United States is willing to return to and fully abide by the JCPOA as long as Iran resumes its performance. Moreover, Washington can consider lifting sanctions against Iran by

means of verification.

At present, the attitude of the United States and European powers is very debatable. On the one hand, the culprit of the current problem is the United States, which unilaterally and irresponsibly withdrew from the JCPOA in 2018. After that, the European signatories did not assume the responsibility of safeguarding the JCPOA.

On the other hand, the United States and Europe still repeatedly emphasize and pressure Iran to strictly abide by the JCPOA. The United States also stressed that since 2019, Iran has seriously violated the JCPOA and accelerated nuclear development, so Washington and international community should put "maximum pressure" on Iran.

The United States has broken the rules, but it still requires Iran to abide by the same rules. This fully shows the arrogance of the United States and is causing increasing troubles to the JCPOA and the Vienna negotiations.

The Obama administration signed the JCPOA in 2015 and the Trump administration left it in 2018. If the Biden administration can really return to the JCPOA, some American Republicans have stated that the United States will withdraw again when they win the White House. How can Iran trust such a country and government? How many countries can guarantee that the dilemma encountered by Iran today will not happen to them in the future?

To be frank, the world needs fairness and justice. We should say no to some behaviors that wantonly undermine international standards. China believes that the current Iranian nuclear crisis was triggered by the U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA. Therefore, Washington should lift all relevant illegal sanctions and win the trust of the international community with practical actions, and Iran should resume full compliance on this basis. Russia holds the same standpoint.

As the only country that has withdrawn from the JCPOA and now hopes to rejoin it, the United States really needs to face the next negotiations with a more positive attitude. The United States needs to show its sincerity and goodwill. In fact, the Iranian delegation participating in this round of negotiations has called on the United States to unfreeze \$10 billion of assets as an initial goodwill gesture.

Iran, the United States and other relevant parties can gather in Vienna again. The Vienna negotiations are still on the way. It is hoped that all parties will continue to work hard and reach a consensus as soon as possible.

Hongda Fan is a professor at the Middle East Studies Institute of Shanghai International Studies University

UAE national security advisor to visit Tehran Monday

TEHRAN - Sheikh Tahnoun bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the National Security Advisor of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), plans to travel to Iran on Monday, IRNA reported.

The trip is taking place upon an official invitation by Ali Shamkhani, secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC).

Sheikh Tahnoun is scheduled to hold talks with his Iranian counterpart Shamkhani as well as some other high-ranking officials.

Enhancing mutual ties and sharing views on the latest developments in the region are among the main

objectives of the top UAE security official's visit to Tehran.

Some regional and international media outlets recently announced that Anwar Gargash, a diplomatic adviser to the UAE president, had briefed reporters that a UAE delegation will soon visit Iran and that their friends are already aware of the trip.

Ali Bagheri Kani, Iran's deputy foreign minister for political affairs and top nuclear negotiator, met with senior Emirati officials on November 24 during a visit to the UAE. The visit took place as Tehran and Abu Dhabi



Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs Ali Bagheri Kani (center) poses for a photo with diplomatic adviser to the UAE's President, Anwar Gargash (right), and Emirati Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Khalifa Shaheen Almarar during a visit to Dubai on November 24.

are moving to reduce tensions with each other.

While in the country, Bagheri Kani met with Gargash and Emirati minister of state for foreign affairs Khalifa Shaheen Almarar.

The discussions stressed the importance of strengthening relations "on the basis of good neighborliness and mutual respect," working for greater regional stability and prosperity and developing bilateral economic and commercial ties, the WAM news agency reported.

Bagheri Kani said in a tweet that

Iran and the UAE had agreed to open a new chapter in bilateral relations.

The visit happened ahead of the nuclear talks in Vienna between Iran and its dialogue partners which are intended to lift sanctions on Iran based on the 2015 nuclear pact.

Gargash earlier this month said that the UAE was taking steps to de-escalate tensions with Iran, according to Reuters.

Saudi Arabia and Iran also launched direct talks in April. Riyadh has described the talks as "cordial" but said they remained largely exploratory.

In truth the U.S has become a weak and therefore dangerous country...

From page 1 ▶ than anyone ever has. Buttigieg is literally a bizarre non-entity in Biden's cabinet who has little to none real experience on any topic of concern for anyone in any kind of power position in Washington.

It beggars belief that anyone hoping for a Democrat in the White House after the next election could stomach such a ticket. It's virtually assured to hand the Presidency back to the GOP and just maybe Donald Trump, who has not been indicted yet for ostensibly sparking the insurrection around the Capitol last January 6th, a day that will be remembered in infamy forever along with other Trumpian malfeasance.

The GOP and with Trump in the White House made horrific mistakes, the prime one being demolishing the JCPOA in 2018. A move which has recently been slammed as the absolute worst U.S. foreign policy error this century, right up there with Baby Bush's war on Iraq that commenced in 2003. And one must KNOW it was a huge error because even some Zionist Apartheid entity leaders have slammed Trump's and Pompeo's move in collusion with Bibi Netanyahu.

And even if one is not privy to the finer

details of the current JCPOA negotiations underway in Vienna, a good many average Americans WANT the negotiations to succeed and this reportedly includes a majority of Jewish voters in the U.S. who are at the margin at least becoming dismayed and disgusted

Even some Zionist leaders have slammed Trump's and Pompeo's move in collusion with Netanyahu against Iran.

with the human rights abuses by the Israeli Zionists and the refusal of Washington so far to mount any kinds of effective objections to what's going on in the West Bank and Gaza. It's only fair that Iran's forty odd negotiators in Vienna are demanding (and focusing on) the lifting of sanctions the Trump gangsters imposed on Iran and also on firm assurances that IF the JCPOA is revived and there is a GOP White House in 2024, which is now more likely than not, that no one can re-do what Trump did in 2018 by essentially destroying what was the finest diplomatic achievement the U.S. has helped engineer in decades with its deal partners in Europe and including Russia.

Moreover, Biden of late has been trying to assert U.S. dominance not with any kind of goodwill and detente but by threatening both Russia around the Ukraine mess and China over Taiwan and its clear, general successes

in challenging the U.S. on the economic front over the past couple of decades. It's no secret that matters have become so fraught with peril this autumn that an error on either side of the divisions could degenerate into a nuclear exchange.

As a now retired former CIA employee, Philip Giraldi, who is notable for his journalism and commentary and who visited Iran as a guest a few years ago says so well: "All this sabre rattling is despicable. Neither Russia nor Iran threaten the U.S. and there is no reason why the U.S. should be eager to defend Taiwan or Ukraine (and also Israel). China's military budget is miniscule compared to the U.S. and the only real threat it represents is as a competitor on world markets, where it is already dominant in a number of key sectors. The U.S. has to get off this global dominance militarism wagon but how do we do it when both major parties embrace it."

The truth is that the U.S. has become a WEAK country since it started so many unwinnable wars since the 1960s. It survives more or less in a cloud of desperation in Washington and mounting failures around its weakness, and so far its sole recourse has been militarism, as if that would revive U.S. standing and prospects. What would really stem the decline is peacemaking, but creative minds in leadership roles have been drunk on power and bullying.

Iran, UN hold talks on Afghanistan

TEHRAN - Secretary of Iran's Strategic Council on Foreign Relations Abbas Araghchi met on Sunday with Mette Knudsen, the deputy special representative for Afghanistan in the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

The two sides discussed the current situation in Afghanistan, including security concerns, terrorism by ISIS, and the future of governance in the country.

Araghchi said that Iran was supporting a regional approach to settle issues in Afghanistan, forming an all-inclusive



government in Kabul, ensuring the security of the country and its borders with Iran, IRNA reported.

The veteran politician also said

Iran attaches special importance

to the situation in Afghanistan to the extent that the Iranian president has appointed a special representative for the country. He also blamed the United States for the current situation in Afghanistan and said that the U.S. presence in West Asia had no result for the region except chaos. Knudsen praised Iran for its role in Afghanistan and receiving Afghan refugees. She highlighted the need for an exchange of views between the UN and Iran on Afghanistan. She also emphasized the necessity of serious consideration of basic problems in Afghanistan, given that the winter is coming.

Iran-Pakistan maritime cooperation can lead to strategic ties: Navy official



TEHRAN - An Iranian Navy official said on Sunday that Iran-Pakistan naval interactions will lead to deep and strategic relations between the two friendly and neighboring countries.

Speaking during a ceremony held for the arrival of the Pakistani fleet to the first naval zone of the Iranian Navy in Bandar

Abbas, Captain Qader Vazifeh also said these naval interactions surely prove that regional countries, especially the friendly and Muslim ones, can manage their own region, IRNA reported.

The Navy official went on to say that there is no need for the presence of trans-regional forces in the Strait of Hormuz, the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Vazifeh expressed hope that these relations and naval visits would become more recurrent.

Pakistan's Ambassador to Tehran, Rahim Hayat Qureshi, and Defense Attaché Imran Kashif were present in the welcoming ceremony.

For his part, the commander of the Pakistani fleet said, "This fleet consists of three ships

that has now entered Bandar Abbas."

Admiral Reyhan added, "Our presence here will increase interactions between the two countries."

The Pakistani fleet, consisting of three warships, docked in the 1st naval zone of the Iranian Navy in Bandar Abbas on Sunday morning and will stay there until Wednesday.

After the military ceremony, Admiral Reyhan was personally welcomed by the commander of the 1st naval zone of the Iranian Navy.

This is the second visit by the Pakistan Navy to Bandar Abbas in the current year. The fleet traveled to Bandar Abbas on April 3-6.

The purpose of the trip was to strengthen military-diplomatic relations between Iran and Pakistan.